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VOL. VII.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

BY

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A brief history of early
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PREFACE

The contents of this book were originally published in *The Monist* (1907-1908) as three separate articles. Wishing to collect them in a compact form, so that they will be more accessible to the general public, the present writer has revised the text thoroughly and added considerable matter in an effort to make it more illuminating.

Since the last political revolution, China has become the cynosure of all the world. But, unfortunately, there are only a few scholars who really understand its people and their ways of thinking. If this first humble attempt to expound, more or less systematically, some of the fundamental features of their thought, which were manifested during the Ante-Ch'in period, will contribute somewhat to the interpretation of this long-misunderstood nation, the present work may be said to have partially attained its purpose.

DAISETZ TEITARO SUZUKI.

Tokyo,
December, 1913.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION

A TOLERABLY authentic history of Chinese civilization dates back as early as three thousand years before the Christian era, when the Three Rulers[1] and the Five Kings[2] began to govern well-settled communities along the Yellow River. The "Shu Ching,"[3] one of the oldest books extant in China, contains among others some important documents issued by Yao and Shun,[4] whose imperial reigns flourished presumably in the twenty-fourth century before Christ. Those documents furnish us with some interesting religious material, shedding light on the early Chinese conception of Nature, which, with only slight modifications, is still prevalent at the present day. But the real awakening of philosophical inquiry in China must be said to be in the time when the Chou dynasty (1122-255 B.C.) first began to show symptoms of decline—that is, in the seventh century before Christ, though the Chinese intellect must have

been active for a long time prior to this, the results of which, however imperfect and fragmentary, found their way in some of the "Yi Ching Appendices" and in Lao-tze's "Tao Te Ching."[5]

Beginning with the seventh century B.C., a galaxy of philosophical and ethical thinkers,[6] led by Lao-tze and Confucius, continued most brilliantly to illumine, for some hundred years, the early stage of Chinese philosophy. It was as though one walked in spring-time, after the confinement of a long, monotonous winter, into the field, where flowers of various hues and odours greet him on all sides. Thus, this epoch, covering about four hundred years, was one of the most glorious periods in the whole history of Chinese civilization; and because it was suddenly cut short by the Ch'in dynasty (221-206 B.C.), it is commonly known as the Ante-Ch'in period. The Chinese mind may have developed later a higher power of reasoning, and made a deeper study of consciousness; but its range of intellectual activities was never surpassed in any other period. If, later on, it gained in precision, it lost sadly in freedom, which sometimes turned to sheer wantonness. It had many problems to busy itself with at this awakening stage of national intellectual life. The universe was yet new to the thinking mind, which was able to find problems to grapple with wheresoever its attention was directed; it was so plastic, and so creative. But after this there set in a time for induration, whereby the in-

tellectual blood was doomed to run along old and stiffened veins.

An unhappy end came quite abruptly to this glorious Ante-Ch'in period. When, in the year 221 B.C., the First Emperor (Shih Huang Ti) of the Ch'in dynasty succeeded in consolidating the small kingdoms and dukedoms of feudal China for the first time into one vast empire, he took the most drastic measures ever conceived by an absolute monarch to suppress the spirit of liberty which was just about to bloom. He would not tolerate a single thought that did not agree with his. He would not countenance scholars and thinkers who dared to assume an independent air and voice their opinions. He silenced all criticism by burying his critics alive, and put an end to the discord of beliefs by burning all the books and documents[7] that were not in sympathy with the new administration (213 B.C.). The effects of such radical measures were just what the Emperor desired. He suppressed all independence of thought and reduced the spirit of the nation to a comatose condition, which lasted for a millennium.[8] During these times, China produced not a single original thinker. The cyclone was so destructive, leaving desolation in its wake, that people did not venture to build any new structure of thought; but were constantly endeavouring to recover what they had lost. They made a diligent research among the literary remains. Whatever discoveries they made

were carefully studied, and commentaries were written by various hands. Those which could not be found, though their traditional existence was known, were even manufactured, and boldly appeared with the old labels on them. So, this period proved a fruitful season for literary forgery.

Buddhism was introduced during this lethargic period of Chinese thought (213 B.C.-A.D. 959). In spite of the strong conservative spirit of the Celestials, the new doctrine did not meet with great opposition. Finding a similar vein of thought in the teaching of Lao-tze, the Buddhists utilized his terminology to the best advantage, and also coined a number of new words to express ideas hitherto unknown to the Chinese. A gradual and steady spread of Buddhism among the scholars paved the way for a renaissance under the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1279). The people, with their characteristic indifference, did not observe the propagation of the foreign doctrine, but gradually recognized the superiority of the Hindu intellect, especially in metaphysics and methodology. This recognition of the merits of Buddhism was a great impulse to the pedantic disciples of Confucius.

Though the Confucians were not inclined in those days to do anything more than merely edit and comment upon the lately discovered classics, Chinese Buddhists busily occupied themselves with the elaboration of their own sacred books. They not only rendered many Sanskrit texts into their own language,

but also produced some original religio-philosophical works. Their inspiration, of course, primarily came from the Buddhist canons, but they assimilated them so perfectly that Chinese Buddhism can be said to stand on its own footing. Its philosophy was more profound than that of Confucius. Their world-conception penetrated more deeply into the nature of things. We generally understand by the history of Chinese philosophy that of Confucianism; for it is nothing more than that, except in the Ante-Ch'in period, when other thoughts than those of Confucius appeared in the foreground. But if we want to understand thoroughly the train of thought that was prevalent during the renaissance, we cannot ignore the significance of the development of Buddhism during the hibernation period of Confucianism.

The re-awakening of Chinese philosophy under the Sung dynasty marked a clearly-defined period in its history.[9] Speculation, which was refreshed after its long slumber of a thousand years, now grappled with the questions of the Sphinx more intelligently, if not more boldly, than it did during the Ante-Ch'in period. Buddhism stirred up the Chinese nerve to respond to the new stimuli. It furnished the Chinese stomach with more food to digest and assimilate into its system. But the Chinese did not swallow the new nourishment with their eyes closed. They intuitively discarded what they thought was not profitable for their practical nature. They drew inspiration from

Buddhism in those problems only which Confucianism set up for their intellectual exercise. It may, therefore, properly be said that this period of Chinese renaissance did not bring out any new philosophical problems outside of the narrow path already beaten by the earlier Confucians. During the Ante-Ch'in period, Confucianism was not yet firmly established, and there were many rival doctrines struggling for ascendancy and recognition. The thinkers of the time felt a strong aversion to being yoked to one set of teachings. But the philosophers of the Sung dynasty never thought of deviating from the old rut. They became conscious of many new thoughts introduced from India, and endeavoured to utilize them only so far as they were available for a fuller interpretation of the Confucian doctrines, which, like the will of the Almighty, were to them irrevocable and infallible. They never dreamt of repudiating or contradicting them in any way. All their new acquisitions, from whatever source they might have come, were invariably made use of for the discovery of something hidden in the old doctrines, and for a fuller analysis of them. What was original with them was the interpretation of the old system in a new light.

Strictly speaking, the Chinese are not a speculative people like the Greeks or the Hindus. Their interests always centre in moral science, or rather in practical ethics. However subtle in their reasoning, and how-

ever bold in their imagination, they never lose sight of the practical and moral aspect of things. They refuse to be carried up to a heaven where pure ideas only exist. They prefer to be tied down in earthly relations wherever they may go. They would deride those star-gazers whose legs are fatally chained to the earth; for to whatsoever soaring heights man's speculation may climb, he is utterly unable to change his destiny here below. This must always be kept in mind when we peruse the history of Chinese thought. The practical nature and conservatism of Confucianism put an eternal seal on it, forever forbidding it to wander in a cometary orbit.

The Sung dynasty is followed by the Yuan (1271-1363), which did not contribute anything worth special consideration to the history of Chinese philosophy. This short Mongolian dynasty left its pages opened where it found them. Its successor, the Ming dynasty (1363-1663), however, produced one great moral and intellectual character in the person of Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529). He was a worthy heir to the thoughts that stimulated and rejuvenated the Chinese mind at the time of the Sung renaissance. Though he was not an independent thinker in the sense of being a non-Confucian, he was original enough to find a new path to the confirmation and realization of the old time-honoured doctrines. After the passing of this luminary, the Chinese intellectual heavens were once more overcast with clouds, and

from his time until the present day nothing significant or deserving special mention has ever stirred Chinese serenity. Under the present revolutionary Government, only recently ushered in after the overthrow of the Manchurian dynasty, it is still a question, as far as its intellectual life is concerned, of how soon China will recover from the dreamy inactivity induced by the excessive use of the opium of conservatism.

Some time, indeed, has elapsed since the introduction of Western culture and thought into the Far East, but it is only a handful of thinkers among hundreds of millions of souls that have been awakened from their time-worn, threadbare usages and traditions and superstitions. However superficially changed their form of government, the masses are not yet quite fully aware of the significance of the intellectual movement of the twentieth century; and this, to a certain extent, also applies to their neighbours. But when the giant of the Orient is fully awakened, and makes free and intelligent use of Western methods of science, he is sure to achieve something quite worthy of his history, and contribute something original to the world treasure of thought; for what has hitherto kept him comparatively backward in the march of civilization is not due to his intellectual awkwardness or to the lack of mental equipment, but simply to the clumsiness of method which he has applied in the investigation of nature and mind. Methodology is the key of knowledge. Let the

Chinese entirely change their former attitude towards modern intellectual activities, and there will surely come a time for the world to feel indebted to the giant of the Orient for his valuable store of knowledge.

The Ante-Ch'in period yields the richest harvest of original thought in the whole history of Chinese philosophy. As the tide of civilization had then advanced far enough, and the general, social, and political environment of the time was very favourable, the Chinese mind plunged itself unreservedly into a bold speculation on life and the universe. It had so far nothing in the past that would distract it from fully expressing itself. It was ushered into a field whose virgin soil had not yet been touched by human hands. Natural selection had not yet set her stamp on any definite conception of life that seemed universally acceptable to the national, moral, and intellectual idiosyncrasy. The competition for supremacy was free and keen, and time had not yet announced the survival of the fittest. Confucianism was found still struggling for its existence; Taoism was not yet recognized as a distinct system; the so-called I-twan, 異端, that is the heterodox teachings, were boldly standing on a level with Chang-tao, 正道, the orthodox. Enjoying the utmost freedom of speech, and unhampered by the tyranny of tradition and learning, every man who had intelligence enough to be original ventured his own opinion, and could find a hearing. If the facilities of printing and distribu-

tion had been such as they are to-day, we can imagine what a spectacular sight the Chinese world of thought would have presented in this Ante-Ch'in period.

The Chinese mind seems to have exhausted itself in this period, for through the entire course of its history no further original thoughts appeared than were expressed at this time either explicitly or by implication. Some of the thoughts that were then uttered audibly enough had even to suffer the sad fate of being almost entirely ignored by later philosophers. As soon as the Confucian teachings gained a strong hold on the people,[10] no doctrines were encouraged to develop that did not help to elucidate Confucius in a better light or in a more popular form. The history of Chinese thought after the Ch'in closely resembles in this respect that of European medieval philosophy, only the former assumed a milder form; for Confucianism did not favour superstition, fanaticism, and irrational vagaries such as we meet with in the Middle Ages. It was practical to a fault, moralizing and positivistic, and refused to be thrown into the abysmal depths of metaphysics. The train of thought found in Taoism, thus choked and obstructed, could not make any further development even after its contact with Buddhism, which represented the type of Hindu speculation in China. Chwang-tze was practically the climax of the Lao-tzean philosophy, with no system, with no method, but pregnant with mystic suggestions and vague assumptions. Therefore, we assert

that the Chinese philosophy of the Ante-Ch'in period was richer in thought, broader in scope, and bolder in speculation than that in any succeeding age.

One thing at least that prevented the Chinese from making headway in their philosophy is their use of ideographic characters. Not only are the characters themselves intractable and clumsy, but their grammatical construction is extremely loose. The verbs are not subject to conjugation, the nouns are indeclinable, no tense-relations are grammatically expressible. Now, language is the tool of reason, and at the same time it is the key to the understanding. When we cannot wield the tool as we will, the material on which we work fails to produce the effect we desire; and the reader is at a loss to understand the meaning which was intended by the author. How could thinkers of the first magnitude express themselves satisfactorily in such a language as Chinese? Terseness, brevity, strength, and classical purity are desirable in certain forms of literature, and for this purpose the Chinese language may be eminently adapted. But while logical accuracy and literal precision are the first requisites, those rhetorical advantages mean very little. More than that, they are actually an inconvenience, and even a hindrance, to philosophical writing.[11]

Another thing that is sadly lacking in the Chinese mind is logic. This fact shows itself in the Ante-Ch'in philosophy, and throughout in the succeeding periods.

In India as well as in Greece, when intellectual culture reached a similar height as that of the Ante-Ch'in period in China, the Greeks had their logic and the Hindus their *hetuvidya* (science of cause). They were very strict in reasoning, and systematic in drawing conclusions. Their minds seem to have been made of much finer fibre than the Chinese. The latter were filled with common sense and practical working knowledge. They did not want to waste their mental energy on things which have apparently no practical and immediate bearings on their everyday life. They did not necessarily aim at distinctness of thought and exactitude of expression, for in our practical and concrete world there is nothing that can claim absolute exactness. As long as we are moving on earth, the Chinese might have unconsciously reasoned, there was no need for them to get entangled in the meshes of verbal subtlety and abstract speculation. Therefore, when their philosophy did not vanish in the mist of vague mysticism, as in the case of Taoism, it tenaciously clung to the agnosticism of everyday experience, in which there was no absolute being, no miraculous revelation, no eternal individual continuity after death.

Now, let us see what were the principal thoughts that were being elaborated by the Chinese mind during the Ante-Ch'in period of Chinese philosophy. They will be broadly treated under "Philosophy," "Ethics," and "Religion."

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Chinese has always been practical and most intimately associated with human affairs. No ontological speculation, no cosmogonical hypothesis, no abstract ethical theory, seemed worthy of their serious contemplation, unless it had a direct bearing upon practical morality. They did, indeed, speculate in order to reach the ultimate ground of existence; but, as they conceived it, it did not cover so wide a realm as we commonly understand it; for to them it meant not the universe generally, with all its innumerable relations, but only a particular portion of it—that is, human affairs—and these only so far as they were concerned with this present mundane life, political and social. Thus, we do not have in China so much of pure philosophy as of moral sayings. The Chinese must be said to have strictly observed the injunction: "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; the proper study of mankind is man." And this fact must be borne in mind when we investigate the history of Chinese philosophy. Though here I have devoted a special chapter to philosophy, it must be understood that the subject was treated by the

Chinese somewhat as a side issue, and not as the main business of their intellectual employment.

Dualism, or the Yin and Yang.

Two antagonistic currents of thought manifested themselves at an early date in the history of Chinese philosophy, and run throughout its entire course. One is represented by the "Yi Ching" and Confucius (551-479 B.C.);[12] the other by Lao-tze.[13] The former advocated a dualism, and showed agnostic, positivistic, and practical tendencies; while the latter was monistic, mystical, and transcendental.

Dualism was the first speculative philosophy ever constructed by Chinese thinkers. It is set forth in one of the oldest writings called "Yi Ching" (Book of Changes). The book is, however, the most unintelligible, most enigmatical, document ever found in Chinese literature. Many conflicting theories have been advanced as to its real value and meaning, and we have not yet come to any definite settlement. As far as I can judge, its true significance had been lost even as early as the beginning of the Chou dynasty. Not being able to determine its exact nature, King Wên (1231-1135 B.C.) and Lord Chou (who died 1105 B.C.) took it for a sort of general treatise on natural phenomena and human affairs, which might also be consulted as a book of divination, and upon this surmise they wrote some commentary notes which imply suggestions of practical wisdom and

moral instructions. Some four hundred years later Confucius again struggled hard to arrive at a definite and true estimate of the book. He seems to have been not wholly satisfied with the practical interpretation of it by Wên and Chou. He wished to find a speculative philosophical foundation in the apparently confusing and enigmatic passages of the "Yi Ching." He is said to have expressed his earnest desire to have his life prolonged several years so that he could devote them to the study of this mysterious literature. The "Appendices," [14] popularly ascribed to Confucius, contain some philosophical reflections, and on that account some later exegetists declare that the "Yi Ching" was primarily a philosophical treatise, and later transformed into a book of divination. Whatever the true nature of the book, it is from it that early Chinese thinkers derived their dualistic conception of the world.

Some lexicographers think that the character *yi* 易 is made of "sun" [15] 日 and "moon" 月. Whether this be the origin of the character or not, the interpretation is very ingenious, for *yi* means change in any form—the change from daylight to moonlight, the change from blooming springtime to harvesting autumn, or the change from fortune to ill-luck, and *vice versa*. Change is a predominant characteristic of all activities; and this is caused by the interplay of the male (*yang*) and the female (*yin*) principles in the universe. Owing to this interaction of these

opposite forces, which in the "Yi Ching" proper are called *chien* 乾 and *k'un* 坤, and respectively represented by a whole line and a divided line, beings now come into existence, and now go out of it, and a constant transformation in the universe takes place.

So it is said in the "Appendix" III:[16] "Heaven is high, earth is low; and the relation between the strong and the weak is determined. The low and the high are arranged in order; and the relation between the noble and the lowly is settled. Movement and rest follow their regular course; and the relation between the rigid and the tender is defined.

"Things are set together according to their classes; beings are divided according to their groups; and there appear good and evil. In the heavens there are different bodies formed; and there take place changes and transformations.

"Therefore, the rigid and tender come in contact; the eight symbols interact. To stimulate, we have thunder and lightning; to moisten, we have wind and rain. The sun and moon revolve and travel, which give rise to cold and warmth.

"The strong principle makes the male, and the weak principle makes the female. By the strong the great beginning is known, and the weak brings beings into completion. The strong principle becomes intelligible through changes; the weak principle becomes efficient through selection. The changing is easy to understand; selection is easy to follow. As it is easy

to understand, there grows familiarity; as it is easy to follow, efficiency is gained. That which is familiar will last; that which is efficient will be great. Lasting is the virtue of a wise man, great is the accomplishment of a wise man. Through change and selection is obtained the reason of the universe. When the reason of the universe is obtained, the perfect abides in its midst."

Again, Confucius says in the "Appendix" IV:[17] "The strong and the weak are the gates of change. The strong is the male gender, and the weak is the female gender. When the male and the female are united in their virtues, the rigid and the tender are formulated, in which are embodied all the phenomena of heaven and earth, and through which are circulated the powers of the spirits bright."

To make another quotation in which the gist of the dualistic conception of the "Yi Ching" is more concisely stated ("Appendix" VI):[18] "In olden times when the wise men made the Yi, they wanted it to be in accord with the nature and destiny of things, which is reason. Therefore, they established the heavenly way in Yin and Yang; they established the human way in humaneness and righteousness; they established the earthly way in tenderness and rigidness. Thus, each of the three powers of nature was made to be controlled by a set of two principles."

Whatever we may call them, the strong and the weak, or the rigid and the tender, or the male and

the female, or heaven and earth, or Yang and Yin, or Chien and K'un, there are, according to the "Yi Ching," two independent principles, and their interplay, governed by certain fixed laws, constitutes the universe. And these fixed laws are nothing else than the sixty-four trigrams (*kua* 卦), as defined and explained, however enigmatically, in the "Yi Ching" proper. The practical Chinese mind, however, did not see this numerical conception of the world in its abstract philosophical signification as Pythagoras did, but confined it to the vicissitudes of human affairs. Even when Confucius attempted to see a natural philosophical basis in the composition of the "Yi Ching," he could not ignore its ethical bearings so as to plunge himself deeply into bold speculations. The most eminent trait of the Chinese mind is to moralize on every imaginable subject. They could not but betray this tendency, even with the apparently nonsensical whole and divided strokes of the eight trigrams.[19]

Positivism.

What is most typical of Chinese thought, together with the dualistic conception of nature, is its strong aversion to metaphysics. Avowed assertions of this sentiment have been repeatedly made by Confucius and his school, who later on proved to be the representative exponent of the Chinese national mind. They persistently refused to go beyond our everyday experiences. Their prosaic intellect always dwelt on

things human and mundane. The discovery of two contrasting principles in nature satisfied their curiosity, speculatively considered; they did not venture into a realm beyond the interaction in this visible universe of the Yin and Yang, and perhaps the mysterious working of the five Forces (*hing* 行). And it was through this interaction and mysterious working that some definite laws have come to be established in the physical world as well as in the moral; and these laws are curiously set forth in the "Book of Changes." Therefore, what we have to do here on earth is to put oursevles in harmony with these laws. When this is done, our life-programme as a human being is complete. Why should we go beyond these observable and intelligible laws of nature and morality, only to find out something transcendental and therefore necessarily having no practical bearing on our earthly life? Are we not sufficient unto ourselves without having our imagination soar so high? This is the most characteristic attitude of Confucius.

Says Confucius: "How could we know death when life is not yet understood?" ("Analects," Book XI). Again: "Do not trouble yourselves with things supernatural, physical prowess, monstrosities, and spiritual beings" (Book VII). Again: "How could we serve spiritual beings while we do not know how to serve men?" (Book XI). In the "Doctrine of the Mean" (*Chung Yung*), however, Confucius expresses

himself much more plainly concerning spiritual beings, (Chapter XVI): "How glorious are the virtues of spiritual beings! Our eyes cannot perceive them, our ears cannot hear them, yet they embody themselves in all things, which cannot exist without them. Yet, the spirits make all the people in the world regulate themselves, cleanse themselves, and clad in the ceremonious dress, attend to the sacrificial ceremony. How full and pervading they are! They seem to be above us, they seem to be with us. It is said in the 'Book of the Odes' that the coming of the spirits is beyond human calculation, and much more beyond a feeling of aversion. The reason why the invisible are so manifest is that sincerity can never be concealed."

According to these passages, the Confucian doctrine is quite apparent. There might be something on the other side of this life. All these natural phenomena and moral doings might have something underneath them, from which they gain their evidently inexplicable energy. Indeed, we feel the existence of something invisible and mysterious; we are compelled to acknowledge this fact at the time of the sacrificial ceremony. But we do not know its exact nature and signification, which are too deep or too hidden from the human understanding to unravel. As far as its apparent, cognizable laws and manifestations are concerned, they are, however enigmatically, stated in the "Book of Changes," and all that we mortals

have to do in this world is to understand these knowable phenomena and leave alone the unknowable. This line of reasoning seems to have appealed most strongly to the Confucian mind.

Indeed, the Confucians and other philosophers speak of T'ien 天, or Heaven or Heavenly Destiny (*t'ien ming* 天命), or the Great Ultimate (*tai chi* 太極), but they never seem to have attempted any further investigation of the nature of this undefined being or principle called T'ien.

* * * * *

It is in the "Yi Ching" that we can trace, though very sporadically, an idealistic, monistic, and mystical tendency, which finally developed into the speculative philosophy of the Sung dynasty, but which was almost completely neglected by the early advocates of the Confucian school. I shall quote here some passages from the "Yi Ching" to illustrate my point. Before quoting, however, it will be opportune to remark here that the term *yi* sometimes has the force and significance of an abstract principle itself rather than the actual phenomenon of mere transformation or interaction, and again that it sometimes designates a system of philosophy which most truthfully explains the reason for all changes in this dualistic world.

"The Yi is not conscious, nor does it labour; it is quiet, and does not stir. It feels, and then communes with the wherefore of the universe. If it were not

the most spiritual thing in the universe, how could it behave in this wise?

"It is through the Yi that holy men fathom the depths of being and explore the reason of motion (*chi* 幾). Deep it is, and therefore it is able to comprehend the will of the universe. It is the reason of motion, and therefore it is able to accomplish the work of the universe. It is spiritual, and therefore it quickens without being speedy, it arrives without walking."[20]

Further, we read: "Therefore, the Yi has the great origin (*t'ai chi*), which creates the two regulators; and the two regulators create the four symbols (*hsiang*); and the four symbols create the eight trigrams (*kua*). The eight trigrams determine the good and evil; and the good and evil create the great work."

In the first of the so-called "Appendices" (*Hsi Tz'u*)[20a] we have:

"The Yi is in accord with Heaven and Earth, and therefore it pervades and is interwoven in the course of Heaven and Earth. Look upwards, and it is observable in the heavenly phenomena; look downwards, and it is recognizable in the earthly design. And it is for this reason that the Yi manifests the wherefore of darkness and brightness. As it traces things to their beginning and follows them to their end, it makes known the meaning of death and birth. Things are made of subtle substance (*ching ch'i* 精氣), and changes occur on account of the

wandering spirits (*yu 'hun* 遊魂). Therefore, the Yi knows the characters and conditions of the spiritual beings (*kuei shan* 鬼神).

"The Yi seems to be Heaven and Earth themselves, and it therefore never deviates. Its wisdom penetrates the ten thousand things. Its way delivers the world, and it therefore never errs. It rejoices in heavenly ordination, and knows its own destiny; therefore it never grieves. It rests in its own abode, and its loving kindness is sincere, and therefore it is capable of love. It moulds and envelops all the transformations in Heaven and Earth; and it never errs. It thoroughly brings all the ten thousand things into completion, and there is nothing wanting in them. Its wisdom passes through the course of day and night. Therefore, the spirits have no quarters, and the Yi is free from materiality."

Finally, Yi seems to be used in the sense of *Gesetzmässigkeit*. For instance: "When the male (*ch'ien*) and the female (*k'un*) are arranged in order, the Yi is established between them. When the male and the female are destroyed, there is no way of recognizing the Yi. When the Yi is no more recognizable, the male and the female may be considered to have altogether ceased to exist."

All these are interesting thoughts, and if Confucius was the real author of these "Appendices" to the "Yi Ching," from which these quotations are taken, they will prove that Confucius was not, after all,

merely a moral teacher, but capable of delving deep into the mysteries of life and existence; and we can say that what made the latter-day Confucianism such as it is, is due more or less to the emphasizing by its followers of certain practical features of the Confucian doctrine at the expense of its more speculative side. If the master were followed more faithfully, and his teachings were developed in all their diverse features, there might have been earlier attempts at a reconciliation between Lao-tzeanism and Confucianism.

* * * * *

Mencius,[21] who was the most brilliant and most militant of all the Confucians of the Ante-Ch'in period, and through whom Confucianism can be said to have been finally and definitely established in such form as we understand it to-day, speaks of the *Hao jan chi ch'i* 浩然之氣 as filling the universe (Book III). This Ch'i can be freely translated "universal energy," or "impulse that awakens, stimulates, and accelerates activity"; it is a kind of psychical agency which animates life on this earth; it is the nervous system of the macrocosm. But Mencius did not use the term in such a broad sense; he limited its sphere and value of activity to our moral life. It is more definite, more psychical, and therefore nearer to humanity than the Confucian conception of T'ien or T'ien-ming, which seems to be a vestige, though considerably refined, of natural religion as professed in the "Shu Ching," or "Shih Ching." None the less Mencius'

Ch'i was too practical, too ethical, to be elevated to the dignity of a universal principle of existence. He did not apparently take any interest in the metaphysical side of the Yi system. He developed only the ethics of his great predecessor, though not in its entirety and completeness. He was truly the representative of the Confucian positivism.

Monism.

There were not lacking, however, in the Ante-Ch'in period certain tendencies that counterbalanced the ultra-practical, positivistic train of thought as represented in Confucianism. Though these tendencies did not attain a full manifestation at any time in the history of Chinese thought, they showed a strong front at this incipient stage to their antagonistic systems. It was quite unfortunate that they were hampered in their development, and had from time to time to lose sight of their essential qualities. Probably this was in the nature of their system. They owe their origin mainly to the teachings of the "Tao Teh Ching,"[22] and may be characterized as monistic, mystic, transcendental, and sometimes pantheistic. Lao-tze, however, was not the first and sole expounder of these thoughts. He doubtless had many predecessors whose words and lives are scatteringly recorded by Confucius, Mencius, Chwang-tze, Lieh-tze, and others, including Lao-tze himself.[23] What was most significant in the author of the "Tao Teh

Ching" was that he gave to these conceptions a literary form through which we are able to trace the history of the Chinese monistic movement to its sources.

When we pass from Confucius to Lao-tze, we experience almost complete change of scenery. Confucius, in whom the Chinese mind is most typically mirrored, rarely deviates from the plain, normal, prosaic, and practical path of human life, and his eyes are steadily kept upon our earthly moral relations. Lao-tze occasionally betrays his national traits, but he does not hesitate to climb the dizzy heights of speculation and imagination. The first passage of the "Tao Teh Ching" shows how different his mode of thought is from that of the Confucian school:

"The reason[24] (*tao* 道) that can be reasoned is not the eternal reason. The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The unnameable is the beginning of heaven and earth. The nameable is the mother of the ten thousand things. Therefore, in eternal non-being I wish to see the spirituality of things; and in eternal being I wish to see the limitation of things. These two things are the same in source, but different in name. Their sameness is called a mystery. Indeed, it is the mystery of mysteries. It is the door of all spirituality."

According to Lao-tze, there is only one thing which, though indefinable and beyond the comprehension of

the human understanding, is the fountain-head of all beings, and the norm of all actions. Lao-tze calls this Tao. But the Tao is not only the formative principle of the universe; it also seems to be primordial matter. For he says in Chapter XXV of the "Tao Teh Ching":[25]

"There is one thing, chaotic in its composition, which was born prior to heaven or earth. How noiseless! How formless! Standing in its solitude, it does not change. Universal in its activity, it does not relax; and thereby it is capable of becoming the mother of the world."

Again in Chapter XIV: "We look at it, but cannot see it; it is colourless. We listen to it, but cannot hear it; it is called soundless. We grasp it, but cannot hold it; it is called bodiless. The limits of these three we cannot reach. Therefore, they are merged into one. Its top is not bright, its bottom is not murky; its eternity is indefinable; it again returns into nothingness. This I call the shapeless shape, the imageless form; this I call the obscure and vague. We proceed to meet it, but cannot see its beginning; we follow after it, but cannot see its end."

In what Lao-tze again seems to conceive his Tao, at once the formative principle of the universe and the primordial matter from which develops this phenomenal world.

"The nature of the Tao, how obscure, how vague! How vaguely obscure! and yet in its midst there is

an image. How obscurely vague! and yet in its midst there is a character. How unfathomable, how indefinite! yet in its midst there is a reality, and the reality is truly pure; in it there is truthfulness. From of old till now, its name never departs, and thereby it reviews the beginning of all things" (Chapter XXI).

The Tao, as the reason of the universe and as the principle of all activity, is something unnameable, and transcends the grasp of the intellect. The Tao, as primordial matter from which this world of particulars has been evolved, is a potentiality; it has a form which is formless; it has a shape which is shapeless; it is enveloped in obscurity and utter indeterminateness. According to what we learn from the "Tao Teh Ching," Lao-tze seems to have comprehended two apparently distinct notions in the conception of Tao. He was evidently not conscious of this confusion. The physical conception, as we might call it, developed later into the evolution-idea of the T'ai Chi[26] by the early philosophers of the Sung dynasty, who endeavoured to reconcile the Yi philosophy with the Taoist cosmogony. The metaphysical side of Lao-tze's Tao conception not only was transformed by his early followers into pantheism and mysticism; it also served as an electric spark, as it were, to the explosion of the famous controversy of the Sung philosophers concerning Essence (*hsing* 性) and Reason (*li* 理). However this be, Lao-tze was the

first monist in Chinese philosophy, as the "Yi Ching" was the first document that expounded dualism.

Lao-tze's philosophical successors in the Ante-Ch'in period, whose literary works have been fortunately preserved down to the present day, are Lieh-tze,[27] Chwang-tze, and perhaps Kwan-yin-tze. They all developed the monistic, mystical, idealistic thoughts broadly propounded in the "Tao Teh Ching." Being ushered into the time when the first speculative activity of the Chinese mind had attained to its full vigour, the Taoist philosophers displayed a depth of intellectual power which has never been surpassed by later thinkers in brilliancy and freshness.

What most distinguishes Lieh-tze[28] in the galaxy of Taoists is his cosmogony. According to him, this nameable world of phenomena evolved from an unnameable absolute being. This being is called Tao, or Spirit of Valley (*ku shen* 谷 神), or the Mysterious Mother (*hsuan p'in*, 玄 牝), all these terms being used by his predecessor, Lao-tze.[29] The evolution did not take place through the direction of a personal will, that has a definite, conscious plan of its own in the creation or evolution of a universe. Lieh-tze says that the unnameable is the nameable, and the unknowable is the knowable; therefore, he did not see the need of creating a being or power that stands independent of this nameable and knowable world. It was in the very nature of the unnameable that it should evolve a world of names and particulars.

It could not do otherwise. Its inherent nature necessitated it to unfold itself in the realm of the Yin and Yang.

To speak more definitely in the author's own words: "There was in the beginning Chaos (*hun tun* or *hun lun*), an unorganized mass. It was a mingled potentiality of Form (*hsing*), Pneuma (*ch'i*), and Substance (*chih*). A Great Change (*tai yi*) took place in it, and there was a Great Starting (*tai chi*), which is the beginning of Form. The Great Starting evolved a Great Beginning (*tai shih*), which is the inception of Pneuma. The Great Beginning was followed by the Great Blank (*tai su*), which is the first formation of Substance. Substance, Pneuma, and Form being all evolved out of the primordial chaotic mass, this material world as it lies before us came into existence" (Chapter I).

In these statements Lieh-tze appears to have understood by the so-called Chaos (*hun lun*) only a material potentiality. But, as we proceed, we notice that he did not ignore the reason by which the Chaos was at all possible to evolve. The reason is the Tao, or, as he calls it, the Solitary Indeterminate (*i tuh*), or the Going-and-Coming (*wang fuh*), or Non-activity (*wu wei*). The Solitary Indeterminate is that which creates and is not created, that which transforms and is not transformed. As it is not created, it is able to create everlastingly; as it is not transformed, it is able to transform eternally. The Going-

and-Coming neither goes nor comes, for it is that which causes things to come and go. Those that come are doomed to go, and those that go are sure to come; but the Coming-and-Going itself remains for ever, and its limitations can never be known.

"What comes out of birth is death, but what creates life has no end. What makes a concrete object is substance, but what constitutes the reason of a concrete object has never come to exist. What makes a sound perceptible is the sense of hearing, but what constitutes the reason of sound has never manifested itself. What makes a colour perceptible is its visibility, but what constitutes the reason of colour has never been betrayed. What makes a taste tastable is the sense of taste, but what constitutes the reason of taste has never been tasted. For all this is the function of non-activity (*wu wei*)—that is, reason" (Chapter I).

Will there be no end to this constant coming and going of things? Is the world running in an eternal cycle? Lieh-tze seems to think so, for he says: "That which has life returns to that which is lifeless; that which has form returns to that which is formless. That which is lifeless does not eternally remain lifeless; that which is formless does not eternally remain formless. Things exist because they cannot be otherwise; things come to an end because they cannot do otherwise, just as those which are born because they cannot be unborn. They who aspire after an

eternal life, or they who want to limit their life, are ignoring the law of necessity. The soul is heavenly and the bones are earthly. That which belongs to the heavens is clear, and dispenses itself; that which belongs to the earth is turbid, and agglomerates itself. The soul is separated from the body and returns (*kwei*, 歸) to its own essence. It is, therefore, called spirit (*kwei*, 鬼). Spirit is returning —that is, it returns to its real abode" (Chapter I).

Lieh-tze thus believes that the cycle of birth and death is an irrevocable ordeal of nature. This life is merely a temporary abode, and not the true one. Life means lodging, or sojourning, or tenanting, and death means coming back to its true abode. Life cannot necessarily be said to be better than death, or death than life. Life and death, existence and non-existence, creation and annihilation, are the inherent law of nature, and the world must be said to be revolving on an eternal wheel. The wise man remains serene and unconcerned in the midst of this revolution; he lives as if not living. This is the characteristic attitude of all the Taoist philosophers; they begin with a monistic philosophy, and end with an ethical attitude of aloofness.

The following passage from Lieh-tze will illustrate what a transcendental attitude is assumed by the philosopher toward life and the universe, which is the psychological outcome of a philosophy of absolute identity:

"A man in the state of Ch'i was so grieved over the possible disintegration of heaven-and-earth, and the consequent destruction of his own existence, that he could neither sleep nor eat. A friend came to him and consolingly explained to him: 'Heaven-and-earth is no more than an accumulated pneuma, and the sun, moon, stars, and constellations are pure luminary bodies in this accumulation of pneuma. Even when they may fall on the ground, they cannot strike anything. The earth is an accumulation of masses filling its four empty quarters. Treading on it will not cause it to sink.' With this both were satisfied.

"Chang-tu-tze heard of it, and said: 'The clouds and mists, the winds and rains are accumulated pneuma in the heavens; and the mountains and plains, the rivers and seas are accumulated forms on earth; and who can say that they will never disintegrate? Heaven-and-earth is merely a small atom in space, though the hugest among all concrete objects. It goes without saying that we cannot have its measurements and know its nature. He who grieves over its possible disintegration must be considered truly great, and he who thinks of it as indestructible is not quite right. Heaven-and-earth must suffer a disintegration. There must surely be the time when it falls to pieces. And could we be free from apprehension when it actually begins to fall?'

"When this was communicated to Lieh-tze, he

laughed, saying: 'It is as great a mistake to assert that heaven-and-earth is falling to pieces as to deny it. Whether it falls to pieces or not, we have no means to tell; be it this or that, it is all the same. Therefore, life does not know of death, nor does death know of life. Coming does not know of going, nor does going know of coming. To go to pieces or not to go to pieces—this does not at all concern me'" (Chapter I).

Transcendentalism.

Chwang-tze,[30] who appeared a little later on the stage of philosophical speculation, was the most brilliant Taoist China has ever produced. Lieh-tze might have been deeper in one sense than his successor, but he was not such a brilliant genius as the latter. The main philosophical problems handled by Chwang-tze were those of Lao-tze, but in many points he extended and detailed what was merely vaguely suggested by his predecessors. He maintained, for instance, with Lao-tze that the world started from the Nameless, but Chwang-tze's Nameless was more absolute and transcendental, if we could use the expression, than that of Lao-tze; for Chwang-tze declares that when we say there was non-existence (*wu* 無) before existence, this non-existence somewhat suggests the sense of relativity and conditionality, but in truth there could not be any such existence as non-existence; and, therefore,

it is better to say that there was in the beginning a "non-existing non-existence" (*wu-wu*)—that is, not conditional non-existence, but absolute non-existence (Chwang-tze, "The Inner," Book II). Chwang-tze in this wise delighted himself with subtle dianoetic argument.

The fundamental conception of Lao-tze's doctrine was monistic and idealistic when contrasted with the Yi philosophy, and showed a certain contempt for the relative phenomenal world where pluralism prevails; but he did not altogether fly away from the latter, he was content to remain there as a quiet, inactive, and harmless fellow, "covering his brightness with the earthly dust." When we come to Chwang-tze, however, the world of relativity was felt like a big pen; he left it behind him in his ascent to the realm of the Infinite, and there he wished to sleep an absolutely quiescent dreamless sleep. This was his ideal. He was, therefore, more radical than Lao-tze in his transcendental idealism.

At the time of Chwang-tze, however, there was such a confused and contradictory philosophical controversy that it awakened him from the transcendental enjoyment of his self-forgetting trance. Chwang-tze was convinced of the ultimate unreality of this phenomenal world, in which he did not know whether or not his was the dream-existence of the butterfly.[31] He argued that as long as things in this world are conditional and limit one another, there is no avoidance

of controversy and contradiction. Each individual mind has its own idiosyncrasy. One and the same truth is reflected therein, perhaps, but each responds differently according to its inner necessity. Suppose a gale sweeps over a mountain forest: the trees resound with their varied notes according to all the possible differences of the cavities which may be found in them. Some sound like fretted water, some like the arrow's whiz, some like the stern command of a military officer, some like the gruff roar of a lion, and so on *ad infinitum* ("The Inner," Book II). And what need would there be to pass a judgment on these multitudinous notes, and declare that some and not others are correct representations of the truth?

Chwang-tze, therefore, says that no good can come out of engaging in a controversy of this nature. As long as there is a relative and conditional existence, there must be good and evil, affirmation and negation, coming and going. It is the height of foolishness to argue that as I am walking one way every man must and ought to walk the same way. Has not everybody the will and right to go his own way? As I should not be compelled by others to deny my own nature, they have the same privilege to follow their own inclinations. What is good to me is not necessarily so to others, and *vice versa*. The stork has long legs, but it would surely resent any human interference with their length; the duck, on the other hand, has short legs, but would not be thankful for

our artificial improvement on their stubbiness. Hsi Shih was a beautiful woman, but when her features were reflected in the water the fish would have been frightened away. There was once a strange sea-bird visiting the garden of the Duke of Lu. He was pleased with it, and had it brought to his court, where he fed it with all the delicacies his culinary department could furnish, and entertained it with the most beautiful music by his court players. But the bird was sad, it neither drank nor ate, and after three days it died. Now, exclaims Chwang-tze, "Why did not the fool feed the bird with things it naturally feeds on, instead of those horrible human concoctions?" Therefore, the philosopher insists in giving everyone his innate freedom and the right to think and act as he feels; and thereby he wishes to reach the point where all controversies may eternally be set at rest; for every dissension is the outcome of human meddling with the heavenly course of things.

But how can we find out what is the real intrinsic nature of each individual existence? Chwang-tze seems to think that the Tao is present in every being, and that the reason why we are in the wrong habit of confusing what is right with what is not right, is because we do not let the Tao work its own way, and, therefore, if we rid ourselves of all the subjective prejudices that we may possess and freely follow the course of the Tao, every being would enjoy his own inherent virtue, and there would be no controversies

and altercations, but our life would be blessed with the transcendental bliss of the Infinite Tao. It is thus simple enough, believes Chwang-tze, to find the real nature of things. Befree yourself from subjective ignorance and individual peculiarities, find the universal Tao in your own being, and you will be able to find it in others, too, because the Tao cannot be one in one thing and another in another. The Tao must be the same in every existence, because "I" and the "ten thousand things" grow from the selfsame source, and in this oneness of things we can bury all our opinions and contradictions. He says: "Let us make our appeal to the infiniteness of the Tao and take up our position there." We observe here the subjective tendency of Taoism, which distinguishes itself so significantly from its rival doctrine, Confucianism. Taoism is mysticism.

What, then, is the Tao? Can we know of its nature more definitely? Let Chwang-tze tell us what he thinks of it. "This is the Tao: there is in it sentiency and constancy, but it does nothing and has no bodily form. It may be handed down by the teacher, but may not be received by the scholar. It may be apprehended by the mind, it cannot be perceived by the senses. It has its root and ground in itself. Before there were heaven and earth, from of old it was securely existing. From it came the mysterious existence of God (*ti* 帝).[32] It produced heaven, it produced earth. It was before the *T'ai Chi* (Great

Ultimate), and yet could not be considered deep. It was produced before heaven and earth, and yet could not be considered to have existed long. It was older than the highest authority, and yet could not be considered old" (Part I, Section VI).

How can this Tao be known and expressed by us? Is our intellectual faculty able to grasp the nature of Tao? Can we analyze it logically and bring it out to our rational plane? Chwang-tze is a mystic, as every Taoist is, and thinks the Tao is beyond all human intellection. When you want to express it and communicate it to another, it is lost. The mind seems to comprehend it, but when it tries to point it out or expose it before others' view, it hides itself within the threshold of consciousness.

"Chih (intellect) went north, and was enjoying himself by walking along the stream of Hsuen (the Mysterious), and climbing the Hill of Yin Pin (the Concealed), when he happened to meet Wu Wei Wei (Non-doing-speaking). Said Chih to Wei, 'I have something to ask you about, sir. What have I to think and reflect in order to know the Tao? Where have I to abide, and what to wear, in order to rest with the Tao? What have I to rely upon, and where to go, in order to obtain the Tao?' Chih asked Wei three times, and Wei made no response. Wei was not averse to answering, but did not know how to answer.

"Having no answer, Chih returned south of the River Peh (White) and proceeded to the Mount of

Ku Ch'ueh (Solitary End), where he saw Chu K'uan (Crazy-Crooked). He proposed the same questions, and Ch'u said, 'Ah, I know it, and will tell you what it is. But while on the point of speaking, I have forgotten what I was about to speak.'

"Having no satisfaction, Chih returned to the Ti Kung (Imperial Mansion), and seeing Huang Ti (the Yellow Emperor), proposed the same questions. Said the Emperor: 'Think not, nor reflect, and you will know the Tao; abide nowhere, put nothing on, and you will rest with the Tao. Have nothing to rely on, nor go anywhere, and you will obtain the Tao.'

"Chih asked: 'You and I know it, while the other two know it not; who is right now?' Said the Emperor: 'Wu Wei Wei is quite right, Ch'u K'uan is approaching, but you and I are far away. Now, the knowing one speaketh not, and the speaking one knoweth not. That is why the sage practises the doctrine of non-speaking. The Tao cannot be brought within human limits, nor can Virtue be reached by human means. That which does is humaneness; that which wants is righteousness; and that which deceives is propriety. Therefore, when the Tao is lost, we have virtue; when virtue is lost, then humaneness; when humaneness is lost, then righteousness; when righteousness is lost, then propriety; for the latter is the blooming of the Tao and the beginning of disorder.'"

Pantheistic Mysticism.

When speculation reaches this point, it naturally turns into mysticism. Intellectual discrimination and the analytical process of reasoning give way to a mystic contemplation of the Absolute. It is peculiar to the human mind that while the intellect is ever struggling to attain to a definite conception of the universe and to state it in most positive terms, the imagination and faith, poetic and religious, insists on concretely and immediately grasping that something which is so slippery as to defy all realistic apprehension and yet presents itself with annoying persistence to our inner eye. The intellect sometimes gains ascendency, and then we have an outspoken expression of positivism. When its days are gone, as the history of thought proves everywhere, we have the predominance of mystic tendencies in philosophy, and mysticism invariably tends towards pantheism. We find in Kwan-yin-tze this culmination of Taoism.

Kwan-yin-tze, according to Ssu Ma-ch'ien's "Historical Records," seems to have been acquainted with Lao-tze as we see from his request to the latter to write a book on Taoism. Kwan-yin-tze, therefore, is earlier than Lieh-tze and Chwang-tze, but the work ascribed to him, and still in our possession, is evidently a later production, though it may contain some of his own sayings scattered in the book. Strictly speaking, it may not be proper, therefore, to classify the Kwan-

yin-tze[33] with Chwang-tze and Lieh-tze as Ante-Ch'in literature, but it contains many characteristic Taoist thoughts which can be regarded as a direct and unbroken linear development of Chwang-tze and Lieh-tze. Hence its place here as the last of the Taoist thinkers.

The Tao, according to Kwan-yin-tze, is that which is above all thought and explanation. When this Tao is evolved, there appear heaven and earth and the ten thousand things. But the Tao in itself does not fall under the categories of freedom and necessity, of mensuration and divisibility. Therefore it is called Heaven (*t'ien* 天), Destiny (*ming* 命), Spirit (*shen* 神), or the Mysterious (*hsüen*, 玄). It is each and all of these. As thus the one and only Tao asserts itself and manifests in all possible expressions and existences, there is nothing that is not the Tao. All things are the Tao itself. It is like the relation between fire and fuel. One flame of fire burns all kinds of fuel. But the fire is not independent of the fuel. When all the fuel burns out, there is no more fire left, as neither is separable from the other. So, one breath of Tao penetrates throughout the ten thousand things. They are in it and it is in them; they are it, and it is they. Find it in yourself and you know everything else, and with it the mystery of heaven and earth (Book I).

Therefore, the essence of heaven and earth is the essence of myself; the spirit of heaven and earth is the spirit of my existence. When one drop of water

is merged into the waters of a boundless ocean, there is no distinction between the two, but a complete homogeneity (IV, 3). Therefore the holy man recognizes unity in multiplicity, and multiplicity in unity (V, 2). The multitude may change, may go through an endless series of transformation, but the one is eternally unchangeable (II, 9). Shadows come and go, but the water which reflects them remains for ever tranquil. The wise live in this tranquillity of the one and serenely look at the coming and going of the many.

As is seen here, the Kwan-yin-tze is filled with the Mahāyāna Buddhist thoughts, which held sway over Chinese minds during the Sung dynasty, when almost all notable thinkers of the day rapped at one time or another at the monastery door. The justifiable supposition, therefore, is that Kwan-yin-tze might have been produced by one of the Buddhist Taoists of those days, especially when we know that the book is ostensibly declared to have been recovered, though its existence was known during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 23). Besides, there are certain terms in the text which were not yet known in the Ante-Ch'in period, and which evidently point to their later introduction. I mean such terms as 流轉 (IV, 4) and 誦咒 (VII, 3).

Taoism has such remarkable features in its doctrine that a foreign origin has been suspected, which, some claim, satisfactorily solves the question of its striking resemblance to Hindu philosophy. They even go so

far as to suggest the Brahmin descendancy of the Yellow Emperor, Lao-tze, and other unknown Taoist thinkers. I will not enter upon a discussion of this point, but the fact remains that there are some significant points of resemblance between Taoism and Buddhism, and that the first Buddhist missionaries drew a large part of their terminology from Taoist lore, and that as soon as Buddhism began to send its roots down in Chinese soil, there were many attempts to bring the two, Taoism and Buddhism, into one religio-philosophical system, and, finally, that the present popular religion in China is a sort of conglomeration of these two teachings, one contributing to it with its polytheistic tendency and the doctrine of Karma, and the other with its belief in heavenly immortality. Kwan-yin-tze, as we have already seen, and will see later, must be said to be one of those early attempts in China which were made to reconcile the pantheistic mystic tendency of Lao-tze and Chwang-tze to Indian idealism. The Kwan-yin-tze is highly interesting in this respect if not in any other. In what follows, the reader will notice how much more openly it breathes the spirit of Buddhism than its predecessors.

"It is one Essence (*ching* 精) that becomes the cold in heaven, the water on earth, and the essence in man. It is one Spirit (*shen* 神) that becomes the heat in heaven, the fire on earth, and the spirit in man. It is one Animal Soul (*po* 魄) that becomes

the drought in heaven, the metal on earth, and the animal soul in man. It is one Soul (*hun* 魂) that becomes the wind in heaven, the wood on earth, and the soul in man.

"Let my essence be merged in the Essence of heaven-and-earth and all things, as all different waters could be combined and made into one water.

"Let my spirit be merged in the Spirit of heaven-and-earth and all things, as all different fires could be united and made into one fire.

"Let my animal soul be merged in the Animal Soul of heaven-and-earth and all things, as all different metals could be melted and made into one metal.

"Let my soul be merged in the Animal Soul of heaven-and-earth and all things, as one tree could be grafted on another and made into one tree.

"It is thus that heaven-and-earth and all things are no more than my essence, my spirit, my animal soul, my soul. There is nothing that dies, there is nothing that is born" (Book IV).

"To the wise there is one mind, one substance, one reason (*tao*), and these three are conceived in their oneness. Therefore, they do not repress the not-one with the one, nor do they injure the one with the not-one" (Book I).

"To illustrate, such changes as cold, heat, warmth, and coolness are like those in a brick: when it is placed in fire it is hot; when put in water it is cold; blow a breath on it, and it is warm; draw a breath

from it, and it is cool. Only its outward influences are coming and going, while the brick itself knows neither coming nor going. To illustrate again: See the shadows cast in the water; they come and go, but the water itself knows no coming, no going" (Book II).

"All things change, but their nature (*ch'i* 氣) is always one. The wise know this oneness of things, and are never disturbed by outward signs. Our hair and nails are growing every minute, but the multitude of people recognize the fact only when they become visible; they fail to know it through its potential signs. For this reason they think things change, and are born and die, while the wise look at them through their inner signs and know that there is no change whatever in their ultimate issuance" (Book VII).

"To illustrate: In the great ocean there are millions of millions of fishes, large and small; but only one body of water. I and this external world with its multitudinous things are existing in the midst of Great Evolution, but their essence is one. To him who knows the oneness of essence, there are neither men, nor death, nor life, nor I. The reasoning of this world may turn the true into the untrue, and the untrue into the true; and again, it may make enemies of friends and friends of enemies. Therefore, the wise, abiding in the eternality of things, think of its changeable aspect" (Book VII).

ETHICS

The moral life can be said to have been the only philosophical subject which, from the earliest stage of culture to the present day, has seriously interested the Chinese, and which has been considered worthy of their earnest speculation. This was even true with the highly metaphysical and mystical school of Taoism, whose followers were deeply interested in compounding an elixir of life and ascending to Heaven as a *sien* (仙, saint) without shedding their corporeal body; while it was the avowed object of Confucianism to discard all subtle reasonings about philosophical problems, but to confine itself to human life in its civil, social, and moral bearings. If religion be represented by the Hebrews, philosophy by the Greeks, and mysticism by the Hindus, practical morality must be said to be the most characteristic trait of the thought which prevailed among the people of the Middle Kingdom. It has been their inmost conviction that the universe is the manifestation of a moral principle, and that every existence in its way has some mission to teach humanity a moral lesson.

They did not, however, conceive the world to be

the creation of a personal god who superintends and directs its course. Their Heaven (*t'ien*), or Heavenly way (*t'ien tao*), or Heavenly Ordeal (*t'ien ming*), is a sort of natural law, that is not personal but somewhat deterministic. When we do not follow its regulations, we suffer the consequence merely because we violated it, and not because we incurred the displeasure of some august being. The Heavenly Way is thoroughly moral, and would not tolerate anything that contradicts it, but no religious significance seems to have been attached to their conception. Man is a moral being pure and simple, there is no intimate relation between morality and religion, as the latter is generally understood by Christians. Throughout the writings of Confucius we are unable to find any religious appeal made either by him or by his followers to a power supernatural or transcendental. If they had a clear conscience or were living in the blissful state of non-action (*wu wei* 無爲), they had everything that they desired, and there was nothing outside that would disturb their peace of mind. They were thoroughly moral, they were thoroughly human, they were thoroughly mundane.

China is rich, therefore, in this class of literature; every thinker or philosopher worthy of the name has dipped his fingers in the subject, expounding his views as to how we ought to behave while yet alive in the world. But here the field is not monopolized between Lao-tzeanism and Confucianism as in the case of

philosophy. At least, there is one writer independent and original enough to stand alone by himself, though unfortunately his school did not make any further development beyond his own immediate disciples. By this I mean Mu-tze's utilitarianism. There is no doubt that this would have been a fruitful system if it could have found a proper support and encouragement among later scholars.

Confucianism.

We shall begin our exposition of Chinese ethics with Confucianism. Whatever influence might have been exercised by other scholars upon Chinese culture, modes of thinking, and social life, they were all outvied by Confucianism, which has been the choice of the people—especially of the middle, learned, and official classes. The reason—or at least one of the principal reasons — why Confucius came to be so honoured and distinguished by the Chinese as their national teacher was due to his common-sense ethics based on humanism and devoid of any mystical or supernatural agency. The Chinese are a sober-minded people, and liked Confucius in preference to all other philosophers.

Another reason which favoured Confucianism was that it is pre-eminently a code of morality for Chinese officialdom. As those who are at all acquainted with their history can testify, the one object most persistently pursued by all educated Chinese was

to obtain an official position with the Government. Their learning and education were not necessarily to cultivate their mental and moral faculties, but to apply them practically to their official lives as the governing class. Learning was not sought for its own sake, but as the means to rule the people. Confucianism, therefore, supplied them with a code of morals as well as a practical political guide; politics and ethics were the same thing with the Chinese. Confucius himself worked indefatigably to put his theories into practice while yet living; but seeing that his efforts were not to be crowned with success in his days, he retired from active political life and began to teach his pupils, the principal object of which was to prepare them for the public service, so that they could succeed him after his death as practical propagators of his doctrine, and not necessarily as transmitters of his vast learning. In this sense he was more of a political reformer than a moral leader, and thus it came to pass that Confucianism has been the prevailing moral and political doctrine in China throughout its history, especially among the mandarins.

To understand Confucianism, we must start with Confucius's doctrine of humanism, which forms the corner-stone of his entire ethics, or at least it has been so understood by his influential disciples.

JÊN, THE FUNDAMENTAL VIRTUE.

All Chinese thinkers admit that man and nature are not mere accidents, that their existence cannot be a haphazard affair, but that there is a Tao—that is, a way or norm—which is the regulator of human conduct and the guide of natural events. There was no dissenting voice among the thinkers so far as the existence of a Tao was concerned. What vehemently engaged them in discussion and controversy was the being or nature of the Tao. The issue was whether it was metaphysical or simply moral, whether it was transcendental or positivistic. The Taoists thought it was the former, while the Confucians adhered to the latter conception. The Tao, says Confucius, is no more than *jên*, and on this basis his ethics is founded.

Now, it is very difficult to find a proper English equivalent for the Chinese *jên*. Broadly speaking, it is sympathy, or lovingkindness, or friendly feeling, or better, feeling of fellowship.

The Chinese character (仁, *jên*) is made out of the two component ideograms 人, man, and 二 two, and its signification is that there is an inborn feeling in every man's heart, which is awakened to its full actuality when he comes in contact with another fellow-being, forming the permanent bond of association between them. This feeling, Confucius declares, is the foundation of society and the road

to all human virtues. It is the Tao; it is the road which must be travelled by every social being; it is the door that must be passed through when going out ("Analects," Book VI, 15) of the house. No moral being can live without this Tao, this road, for that which can be dispensed with even for a moment is no more the Tao ("Chung Yung," Chapter I). Therefore, the Tao is the feeling of fellowship, and the feeling of fellowship is the Tao.

This fellow-feeling is the reason of the Golden Rule. Without it, one will not be kept from doing to others what one would not have done by others ("Analects," XII, 2; XV, 23). For indeed the feeling is that of humanity itself. Says Confucius: "A man who has *jên*, wishing to establish himself, will have others established; wishing himself to succeed, will have others succeed" (Book VI). The feeling of fellowship is the primary altruistic instinct of man, which in spite of his innate egoism drives him out of his narrow selfish limitations, and which seeks its own satisfaction through a negation, as it were, of himself. Confucianism does not believe in the innate baseness of human nature, that is, in its absolute egoism; but it asserts the existence of an altruistic impulse in every human heart. The latter is not a modified development of egoism, but is inherent in humanity.

It is in this spirit that Mencius says: "Everybody has a feeling for others which he is unable to

endure. . . . Suppose a child is at the point of slipping down into a pit. It awakens in the spectator a mingled feeling of apprehension and compassion, which urges him to an immediate rescue of the child. This is not because he wants to incur a favour upon its parents. This is not because he wants to be honoured by his friends or fellow-villagers. This is simply because he cannot bear its pitiful scream. Men who have no feeling of pity, therefore, are no human beings" (Book II*a*). As Schopenhauer made sympathy (*Mitleid*) the foundation of his ethics, so the Confucians consider feeling of fellowship as the prime principle on which the grand edifice of human society is built.

All virtues spring from *jên*. They are no more than the modifications of this fundamental feeling, as in various ways it comes related to the will, intelligence, desires, and impulses. The circumstances under which we move are ever changing, and our feelings respond to them accordingly, assuming thereby different names, such as loyalty, filial piety, courage, propriety, faithfulness, righteousness, long-suffering, and benevolence. Therefore, Confucius affirms that in his dealings with men and things he had only one principle (*tao*) to guide him ("Analects," Book IV, 15); and that by this he meant no more than the feeling of fellowship, is confirmed by most Confucians.

Judging from the general trend of Confucianism,

only two moral principles are possible: one is fellow-feeling or altruism, and the other is egoism (*cf.* "Mencius," Book III*a*). When our feelings do not go out to our fellow-beings, they are concentrated on our own selfish motives. When the latter sense is cultivated at the expense of the former, society falls into pieces and humanity is ruined, and the *raison d'être* of a moral being is lost. Mencius, therefore, says: "*Jên* (fellow-feeling) is man himself" (which is also pronounced *jên* in Chinese).

To quote Mencius again: "Fellow-feeling is the highest heavenly honour ever given to men. It is the safest abode ever secured for men. There is nothing that could check its course" ("Mencius," Book VII). Ch'êng-tze,[34] a great philosopher of the Sung dynasty, says: "Fellow-feeling is the norm of the universe. When the norm is lost there ensues lawlessness and discord." Chou-tze,[35] another and later great Confucian, comments on *jên*, saying: "*Jên* is the virtue of the soul and the reason of love." It is interesting to contrast the Confucian definition of *jên* with that of Han-fei-tze[36] in his "Commentary on Lao-tze": "*Jên* is to love others with gladness of heart, to rejoice when they are blissful, and to be grieved when they suffer misery. This is because the heart is unable to refrain from being so affected, and has nothing to do with a desire for compensation. Therefore, says Lao-tze, 'Superior *jên* works as if not working.'"

But it must be noticed that *jên* was used by Confucius as well as by his disciples, not only in its general and ultimate signification, but in its specific applications. To them, *jên* meant not only the most fundamental ethical feeling innate in man, but its particular modifications as practised in our daily life. Every reader of the Confucian "Analects" is well aware of the various senses in which the term *Jên* is used by the Master, and we are sometimes at a loss how to arrive at a definite conception of it. But the fact seems to be that Confucius himself did not have a very clear analytical comprehension of *jên*, forming the central idea of his ethics. It is true that he was quite conscious of one ultimate principle which underlies all virtues and which is generically known as *jên*; for he declared that in his daily conduct he was guided by only one principle. But his application of the term *jên* indiscriminately to this principle as well as to its practical specifications was somewhat confusing. Hence the ambiguity in which *jên* is involved throughout the "Analects."

Dr. Y. Kaniyé enumerates in his "Studies in Confucius" (p. 297) the five different shades of meaning given to *jên* by the Master, which are (1) prosperity, (2) kindheartedness, (3) charity, (4) sincerity and sympathy, (5) unselfishness (or self-control). When the Chinese speak of three or five cardinal virtues, *jên* must be understood in its specific sense.[37]

Now the question is: "How are we to cultivate

fellow-feeling and put it in actual operation in our every-day life?" This is the gist of practical Confucianism, and the moral efforts of its followers are concentrated upon the cultivation of this feeling. Even the Master himself did not claim to have brought his fellow-feeling into perfect development, and naturally none of his three thousand disciples were said to have attained to it. But Confucius declared toward the end of his life: "I behave myself as my heart desires, yet it never transgresses the mean" ("Analects," Book II, 4). Here he may be said to have reached the state of perfect adjustment between natural impulses and moral discipline. He is now *jên* itself. He has no scruples, no hesitancy, no deliberation as to what would be his proper conduct under given conditions. He is no longer hampered by any improper thoughts and impulses. When a person reaches this stage, he is said to be a sage, or holy man (*sêng jên*), and Confucius, according to the Chinese, fully deserves this title. He behaves as freely and innocently as a child fresh from the bosom of nature, and all that he does never deviates from the Middle Way (*chung tao* 中道).

Reverence and Self-inspection.

Let us now approach the question: "By what means can one reach this pinnacle of moral perfection?"

According to Confucius, *ching* 敬 or *kung* 恭 is

the road that finally leads to the perfection of humanism and to the full development of fellow-feeling. It is a reverential attitude of a moral person toward his own being. Etymologically, *kung* 恭 is composed of "heart" and "many hands," "many hands" meaning "together" or "conjoined." It is a state of mind prompting reverential deportment. *Ching* 敬, which is composed of "mindfulness" and "gentle tapping," means self-restraint, self-respect, deliberation, gravity, and dignity. *Ching* and *kung* are generally used together to make the one clearer by the other and more definite. But, separately, *kung* is more of the outward deportment and *ching* of the inner feeling. When the feeling is carefully nourished and purified within, and the outward manners are deliberately adjusted, the egoistic impulse is gradually subdued, and the altruistic one proportionately strengthened, until the time comes when the two are thoroughly harmonized.

The Confucians have no personal God who directly controls the human soul. They do not appeal to any outward object to be elevated in their moral life. They concentrate all spiritual efforts on themselves in order to develop from within what they possess from their very nature. They endeavour to be modest in their self-asserting claims. They keep themselves well guarded against any possible intrusion of evil, inhuman thoughts and impulses. They inspect themselves closely to see whether anything that is not of

fellow-feeling is being stirred in them. They move about very deliberately and reverently not to let loose any evil, selfish impulses, which they might innocently awaken in themselves. Therefore, Confucius says, when asked how *jên* should be practised: "When you are away from home, behave yourself as if receiving a great personage. When employing people, behave yourself as if assisting at a great sacrifice. Do not do to others what you would not have others do to yourself" (Book XII). This is tantamount to saying: "Keep yourself always in a reverential mood, and let not your hasty and improper passions take hold of you." In reply to his favourite disciple, Yen Hui, Confucius says: "Overcome your egotism and return to propriety" (*li* 禮). When asked for further details, he added: "Do not see anything improper. Do not listen to anything improper. Do not speak anything improper. Do not move towards anything improper" (Book XII). According to these injunctions the Confucian method of maturing a feeling of fellowship is to give the necessary psychological time to all the impulses, so that when the first storm of emotional agitation passes over, the mind will be prepared for a proper adjustment of itself for a becoming action. When this practice is repeated with the whole heart and with sufficient frequency, one's deliberate moral judgments and headstrong natural impulses will finally be adjusted, any feeling or thought that is improper and inhuman being

perfectly subdued, and all that is of fellow-feeling being matured to its full strength.

Sincerity (*chêng* 誠).

It will be evident that the first step which a man must take to realize and perfect a feeling of fellowship, is to guard himself in his solitary moments, that is, to be sincere with himself, not to play the hypocrite, and to freely manifest the feeling as it moves within.

So we read in "The Great Learning"[38] (Chapter VI): "By being sincere in all one's soul-activities (*i* 意) is meant that one should not deceive oneself as in disliking an offensive odour, or in being attracted by a beautiful colour. This is called being sufficient unto oneself. Therefore the superior man must ever be watchful over the self in his solitary moments.[39]

"There are no evil things which the mean man in his retired moments would shrink from doing. But when he sees a superior man he becomes deceitful, trying to cover his evils and to manifest his goodness, although others can recognize him as if looking into their own lungs and livers. What, then, is the use [of trying to hide evil thoughts]? This is to say that whatever is really within you will be made manifest. Therefore, the superior man must ever be watchful over the self in his solitary moments."

And again in the "Doctrine of the Mean":[40]

"The Tao is not a thing that could be done without even for a moment. What is done without is not the

Tao. Therefore, the superior man is ever watchful over himself even when he is not seen by others; he is ever fearing even when he is not heard by others. Nothing is so manifest as that which is hidden; nothing is so conspicuous as that which is invisible Therefore, the superior man is ever watchful over the self in his solitary moments."

Evil thoughts are more ready to creep into a man's heart in his solitary moments than at any other time; improper impulses find his ear more prepared for their whisperings then than at any other time. Be deliberate and scrupulous, watch over yourself religiously, when you are alone. This is the way to be sincere to yourself and to avoid all improper thoughts that are not in accord with the tender, loving, self-sacrificing fellow-feeling. "Sincerity (*chêng*) is the heavenly way, and to strive after sincerity (*chêng chih* 誠之) is the human way. Sincerity hits the mark without ado, it prevails without premeditation, quietly and leisurely it is in accord with the nature of things, as is the case with the holy man; while to strive after sincerity means to adhere firmly to goodness when the latter is discerned and espoused." So runs the declaration of Confucius. *Jên*, then, naturally came to be identified with sincerity of heart, and how to be sincere with oneself became a paramount issue with later Confucians.

That the doctrine of sincerity is to be developed from the Confucian conception of fellow-feeling is

quite natural. Admit the existence of an altruistic impulse in man, and also admit that this impulse could be matured into a constant, ruling, central, and animating moral emotion through a systematic training, and that the discipline consists in maintaining an habitual reverential attitude toward one's own moral personality; and the natural course of development in practical Confucianism will be the doctrine that one should guard oneself against the arrogance of self-assertion in solitary moments, when all external inhibitory forces are absent. This self-examination or self-introspection will gradually unfold the sense of moral dignity, naturally associated with which is the desire to be sincere to oneself as an ethical personality. Through sincerity now one's moral value will be positively appreciated, and the altruistic feeling will be developed so as to regulate the egoistic within its reasonable limits.

Thus, the "Doctrine of the Mean" somewhat systematically advances the doctrine of sincerity, which is the doctrine of the mean.[41] The author seems to have had a more synthetic intellect than his Master, and his doctrine of sincerity is comprehensive. We read in his work:

"Intelligence unfolding through sincerity is Essence (*hsing*, 性). Sincerity reached through intelligence is Religion (*chiao*, 教). When sincerity is attained, intelligence is attained; when intelligence is attained, sincerity is attained" (Chapter XXI).

"It is only through the perfect sincerity of the universe that Essence is thoroughly comprehended. When Essence is thoroughly comprehended, the essence of humanity is thoroughly comprehended. When the essence of humanity is thoroughly comprehended, the essence of things is thoroughly comprehended. When the essence of things is thoroughly comprehended, one can assist heaven-and-earth in its evolutionary work. When one can assist heaven-and-earth in its evolutionary work, one can be said to be occupying the same rank as heaven-and-earth" (Chapter XXII).

"Sincerity works by and through itself; the Path leads by and through itself. Sincerity is the end and the beginning of things. Without sincerity no existence is possible. Therefore, sincerity is most honoured by the superior man.

"One who possesses sincerity makes perfect not only himself, but others. That which makes the self perfect is humanity (*jên*), that which makes others perfect is intelligence. These are the virtues of the Essence, and the way leading to the unity of the internal and external. Therefore, there is not a moment when they are not exercised in the fitness of things (Chapter XXV).

"Perfect sincerity never ceases working. The Reason (理, *li*) of heaven-and-earth can be comprehended in one word. What makes the Reason is not dualistic, and therefore it knows no limits in the

creation of things; the Reason of heaven-and-earth is wide, solid, high, bright, far-reaching, and everlasting" (Chapter XXVI).

According to this, the Tao is identified with sincerity (*ch'êng*), for it is sincerity that works out the transformation and constant growth of the ten thousand things, and that completes and guides the course of the universe. Without sincerity no being could come to existence, no change or transformation could take place. Sincerity is law, constant in its work. It composes the essence of human being. All moral qualities grow naturally from the cultivation of this fundamental virtue. Be sincere to yourself, be sincere to your own true nature, and above all be sincere to the laws of the universe that make the ten thousand things grow and regulate the concatenation of the four seasons.[42] For sincerity is the essence of human being. For it is humanity itself.

In concluding this paragraph on sincerity, it may be remarked that the Kantian precept of morality, "so to will that the maxim of thy conduct can become a universal law," had been most explicitly foreshadowed long before his time by one of the most representative Confucians, the author of the "Chung Yung." There are some cosmic laws pervading and regulating all things, which, when subjectively interpreted, are no more than sincerity. Man as a moral and rational being must conform himself to these laws, must be sincere to himself, must work out what

his inner reason or altruistic feeling of fellowship dictates, for these dictates are no more than cosmic laws themselves issuing from the sincerity of heaven-and-earth. Therefore, "the superior man moves so as to make his movements in all generations a universal path; he behaves so as to make his conduct in all generations a universal law; he speaks so as to make his words in all generations a universal norm" (Chapter XXIX). Why? Because "the way of the superior man never errs: have it applied to himself, or have it bestowed upon the masses of people, or have it judged by the [ancient] three sage-kings, and it never errs. Have it established in heaven-and-earth, and it never violates; have it examined by all spiritual beings, and its truth is never doubted; leave it to be sanctioned by holy men after a lapse of one hundred generations, and yet no uncertainty remains [as to its verity]."

Mencius.

The development of the Ante-Ch'in Confucianism must be said to have attained its consummation in Mencius, who was the best representative interpreter of his master. Indeed, were it not for his most brilliant defence and upholding of the system, it would perhaps never have enjoyed its triumphal progress throughout the subsequent long history of Chinese thought.

At the time of Mencius there were many different doctrines propounded by able original thinkers, each

of whom struggled to gain the upper hand over the others. Confucianism did not thrive any better than other systems,[43] and if it had failed to have such a brilliant and masterly personage as Mencius among its followers, it might have fared differently. It was he who praised Confucius to the sky, declaring that "Never since the creation of the world was there a person equal to Confucius." What Mencius did to Confucianism somewhat resembles what Chwang-tze did for the philosophy of Lao-tze, and in many respects each disciple typically represents the doctrine which his master so eloquently expounded.[44]

The contribution of Mencius to Confucianism is his doctrine of the essential goodness of human nature. This was a natural sequence from the conception of fellow-feeling and sincerity. Grant that every man is endowed with an altruistic impulse called by Confucius the "feeling of fellowship" (*jên*), and that this can be developed and matured by reverence and sincerity which will keep under restraint all impetuous, self-disgracing, egotistic impulses and desires; and further grant that it is by and through sincerity, as is most explicitly stated in the "Doctrine of the Mean," that not only movement of the heavenly bodies is made possible but the cycle of the four seasons, and the growth and transformation of all living things on earth; and finally grant that the existence of natural and moral laws binding together all beings, animate and inanimate, in a harmonious

whole, is dependent upon the sincerity of heaven and earth—our natural question, then, will be, "What is this sincerity?" Being a practical moralist, Mencius did not speculate on the problem from the standpoint of a metaphysician. He did not think of a sort of cosmic mind that might be existing in heaven-and-earth and regulating things in sincere conformity with its essential goodness. But he reflected: As long as it is the virtue of sincerity that keeps order in nature and society, sincerity must be said to be synonymous with harmony and goodness. Man as essentially a manifestation of the virtue of sincerity must be good in his nature. Otherwise, how could he at all evolve goodness out of himself? How could the being sincere to his nature be considered the height of morality? Man must be essentially good in his nature, as he cannot develop from within what he is not naturally endowed with. Therefore, "there is a way to be sincere to oneself. If a man has no clear knowledge of goodness, he cannot be sincere to himself. For this reason, sincerity is the heavenly way, and to reflect on sincerity is the human way. There is nothing that will not be moved by utmost sincerity; and if not for sincerity, nothing will ever be moved" (Book III).

Mencius thinks that it is human nature to be good, just as it is the nature of water to seek its level, or as it is the nature of the willow-tree to be pliable and elastic.

Kao-tze[45] said: "Nature is like a running water: when it is turned eastward, it flows eastward; when it is turned westward, it flows westward. Human nature has no choice between good and not-good as water has no choice between east and west." To this, Mencius replies: "Truly, water has no choice between east and west, but has it no choice between up and down? The goodness of human nature is like water seeking the lowest level. There is no man who is not good, there is no water that does not seek its lowest level. Now, that water, when whipped and tossed, could be passed over one's forehead, or that, when arrested and driven in another direction, it could be made to go over a hill, is not in the nature of water. It is due to the force of circumstances. Man could be made to do not-goodness, for his nature is as susceptible as water" (Book XI).

Farther below in the same book, Mencius gives the contents of goodness when he says: "Man's impulse is to do good, for his nature is good. That he does not do good is not the fault of his natural faculty. A feeling of sympathy everybody has; a feeling of shame everybody has; a feeling of deference everybody has; a sense of discrimination everybody has. The feeling of sympathy is humaneness (*jên* 仁); the feeling of shame is justice (*i* 義); the feeling of deference is propriety (*li* 禮); and the sense of discrimination is intelligence (*chi* 智). Humaneness, sense of justice, propriety, and intelligence are not what is

moulded into us from without. They are inherent in us, only men are not conscious of them (Book IV*a*).

"Therefore, a man without a feeling of sympathy is not human; a man without a feeling of shame is not human; a man without a feeling of deference is not human; a man without a sense of discrimination is not human. The feeling of sympathy is the starting-point of humaneness; the feeling of shame is the starting-point of justice; the feeling of deference is the starting-point of propriety; and the sense of discrimination is the starting-point of intelligence. A man has these four starting-points as he has four limbs; and those who, having these four starting-points, plead incapability are mutilating themselves" (Book II*a*).

Of these elementary moral sentiments making up the contents of goodness, Mencius seems to have thought the first two, humaneness and righteousness (or justice), to be more fundamental than the other two; for he says (Book IV*a*): "Humaneness is the human heart, and righteousness (or justice) is the human way. I pity those who digressing from the way do not walk in it, and those who abandoning the heart do not know how to regain it." Again (Book IV*b*), when he was asked what was the work of a scholar, he replied that it consists in the ennoblement of his mind. When further asked, he said: "It is no more than [the cultivation of] humanheartedness (*jên*) and righteousness (*i*). It is not human-

hearted to kill even a single innocent being; it is not righteous to take what is not one's own. Where is our abode? Nowhere but in humanheartedness. What is our way? Nowhere but in righteousness. To abide in humanheartedness and to walk in righteousness, here lies the consummation of a great man's work."

Lastly, in Book IV*b*, Mencius repeats that "Every man has a feeling which he is unable to endure for others, and humanheartedness consists in extending this feeling even to things you can endure for others. With every man there is something which he dares not do to others, and righteousness consists in extending this to what you can dare do to others."[46]

From this it can be seen that Mencius proposes two fundamental moral sentiments, humaneness or humanheartedness and righteousness, both of which are differentiations of the Confucian feeling of fellowship, or rather two phases of it. The Mencian *jên* is the affectional and esthetic aspect of the Confucian *jên*, while his *i* is its volitional and ethical aspect. One is love, grace, and a subjective feeling; while the other is duty, moral "ought," and an objective consideration for others. One is the expansion of the allruistic feeling, and the other is the inhibition of egoism, and thus each complements the other. Again, the one is the human heart itself, the abode where a man finds his home (Book III*a*); and the other is the walk which must be traversed by all men. The one

is "not to will what ought not to be willed," and the other is "not to do what ought not to be done" (Book IV*b*).

Thus the Confucius's fellow-feeling has undergone through Mencius a more analytical consideration, and his teaching has developed into the form in which we have it to-day. That is to say, the Confucian ethics started in the teaching of humanheartedness or the feeling of fellowship, which is possessed by every human being, by every social animal that is capable of associating with others and developing a consciousness of social solidarity. This fundamental feeling, though only rudimentarily present in the human heart, can be matured to its full power through a constant vigilance over oneself in all time, not only when one is alone, but when one comes in contact with the world. And this vigilance over the heart must begin with the cultivation of the sense of reverence for one's own personality as a moral being. If a man have no regard for his ethical character, he would surely sink to the level of the lower animals. And this self-reverence, in other words, means to be sincere to one's own inner constitution, which is good and above egoistic interests. If human nature were not good, sincerity to oneself might come to mean an unrestrained gratification of selfishness; for then no moral law could be sacred to one but that of one's own nature. Some one might exclaim: "As I am the devil's child, I will live from the devil." This sort of sincerity

will surely contradict the spirit of the Confucian doctrine of fellow-feeling, and so proclaims Mencius: "The nature of man is good." This is the consistent development of the Confucian ethics. But Mencius did not stop here, for he added another virtue to man's moral being, the virtue of righteousness, and two more, propriety and intelligence; and he made all these four the most fundamental virtues possessed by man, which ought to be developed in order to perfect moral personality and to benefit the world through this perfection.

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Though Confucianism can be said in a sense to be the Chinese philosophy and ethics, there were not lacking, especially in the Ante-Ch'in period, some other ethical teachings which were vigorously contesting supremacy with Confucianism, and among them we can mention the Taoist Yang-tze, Mu-tze, and perhaps Hsün-tze. But let us first examine the ethics of Lao-tze, or Taoism as it is commonly designated, which always stands contrasted to Confucianism.

Ethics of Taoism.

The Wu Wei.

The Taoists were no doubt better metaphysicians but poorer moralists than the Confucians. Their system of moral teachings may be called negativistic egoism. For their main principle of conduct is to

enjoy the bliss of life in quiet solitary retirement, free from all worldly cares and relations, and by devoting all their time to a serene contemplation of nature in its absolute, eternal aspect, and not in its ever-struggling, ever-becoming activity. They are not selfish in the sense that they want to assert their own egotistic will over that of others. In fact, they strongly advocate the doctrine of non-resistance (*pu chêng chih tê*, 不諍之德), but this not because they want to promote the general welfare of humanity, but because of their own preservation and happiness and peace. Let people do whatever they like, and let them assert their own egotism in defiance of everything else, but in the end they will be their own destroyers. For their egotism, instead of hurting non-resisting innocents, recoils upon themselves, as egotism is the moral boomerang. Lao-tze teaches: Let others have precedence, and lo! I am preserved. Or, in his own words: "The holy man puts himself behind and he comes to the front. He surrenders himself and he is preserved. Is it because he seeks not his self? For that reason, he accomplishes his self" (Chapter VII). Here is the gist of the whole Taoist ethics.

When the Taoists are said to be egotistic, it is not meant that they are grossly materialistic egotists who unblushingly affirm their hedonistic impulses. Far from it; they are harmless innocent recluses, who have no other desire than to be left alone, in order

that they may continue their undisturbed meditation in a solitary cell. They have no particular desire either on this earth or after death. But for one thing they seem to esteem their own self above all else. They have no desire to sacrifice their all-precious self for the happiness of others. Indeed, they do not desire any worldliness, and have no craving for the vanity of vanities that is doomed to pass. But they seem to have cared very much for personal immortality, not after death but in this life. Lao-tze, Chwang-tze, and Lieh-tze all had a very exalted view on this matter. They intuitively knew that this life as it is lived is a manifestation of the Absolute and as such immortal, and, therefore, that there is no need of seeking immortality after death. The later Taoists, however, could not understand this mystic conception of life and immortality, and naturally upheld a corrupted, degenerated, and distorted view of immortal life on this earth. Some of the later Taoists even claimed that they knew the secret of preparing the elixir of immortality, which had first been discovered by their venerable master Lao-tze and transmitted guardedly through generations. This was the first great loophole through which the Taoists gradually fell into a hopeless system of crass popular superstition.

The backbone of the Taoist egoism is 無爲 *wu wei*. This term is generally rendered non-action, while non-assertion[47] gives in many cases a more

correct sense of the original. *Wu wei* does not mean to sit idle and to do nothing. It means not to interfere with others' affairs, or even with one's own as long as they flow of themselves from the inner fountain of the Tao.

Says Lao-tze (Chapter II): "Therefore, the holy man conducts his affairs with non-assertion; he practises the doctrine of silence. All things are working and he does not refuse [to work with them]. All things are born [and so is he], but he does not claim ownership; all things are achieving [and so is he], but he is not presumptuous. His merits are accomplished, but he does not dwell in them."

Again, in Chapter LXIV: "He who asserts is defeated; he who seizes suffers loss. The holy man asserts not, therefore he is not defeated; he seizes not, therefore sustains no loss. People fail when they are nearly at the point of accomplishing the work they have undertaken; if they were as cautious in the end as in the beginning, they would be saved from failure. Therefore, the holy man desires not-desiring, prizes not the treasure that is unobtainable, learns not-learning, retires where the masses pass by; and thereby he assists in the natural development of all things, but he never dares to assert himself."

In Lieh-tze we are told of the subjective state of one who has attained to *wu wei*, the goal of the Taoist philosophical training, and the reader will be able to judge for himself what it is like to abide in

wu wei, if the following passage be thoroughly comprehended:

"Lieh-tze, who had Lao-shang-shin for his master and Pe-kao-tze for his companion, made great progress in the teachings of these two philosophers, and when he came back he was riding on the wind. Yin-shang hearing of it stayed with Lieh-tze for some months [to learn the secrets], but he received no intimation whatever. One day he found an opportunity to approach Lieh-tze on the subject, and implored him ten times to divulge his mysterious accomplishment; but Lieh-tze each time refused to answer. Whereupon Yin-shang grew angry with the master and wanted to take leave of him. Lieh-tze made no protest.

"Some months passed, but Yin-shang felt still uneasy about the matter, and came back to his old master, Lieh-tze. Said the latter: 'How is it that you are here again when you left me only a little while ago?' Replied Yin-shang: 'I had something about which I wanted your information, but you refused me, and I naturally felt offended. But the ill-feeling is no more now, and I am here again.'

"Lieh-tze said: 'Formerly, I thought you were above such petty feelings, but I find now that you are even so small-minded as that. Sit down, and I will tell you about what I learned through my old teacher. When I stayed three years with the old master as teacher and with Peh-kao as companion, my mind dared not think of what is right and what

is not, while my mouth dared not say anything about gain and loss; and it was then that the master gave me a kindly glance. In five years, my mind again began to think of what is right and what is not, while my mouth began to speak of gain and loss; and the master relaxed his rigid expression and smiled indulgently at me. In seven years, I just let my mind think of whatever it desired, and there was no right or wrong; I just let my mouth speak whatever it wanted to speak, and there was no gain or loss. The master then invited me to come and sit by him on the same matting. In nine years, all restraint on my thought as well as on my utterance was brushed away, and I was not conscious of right and wrong, gain and loss, whether they were with me or with somebody else; nor did I know whether Lao was my master, or whether Peh was my companion. Within and without, nothing interfered. Then the eye became like the ear, the ear like the nose, and the nose like the mouth—they became all one. The mind alone predominated, the body was dissolved, the flesh and bones all melted away. I was not conscious where my body rested, nor where my feet trod; I drifted east or west as the wind blew, like a leaf or a rind detached from the tree; was I riding on the wind, or was the wind riding on me? I did not know which.

"'With you, however, it is quite different, who have not stayed long enough, and who even feel hurt and repeatedly find fault with me. The ether

will not embrace you, not even a portion of your body; nor will the earth bear you, not even one member of your being; and how could you hope to tread on the vacuity of space and ride the wind?'" (Chapter II: "The Yellow Emperor").

The above is the subjective state of moral perfection as viewed by the Taoists, which is above all artificial restraints or regulations, and in perfect harmony with the transcendental Tao; that is, *wu wei*. But when this doctrine of not doing anything is too inclined toward passivity, it becomes the ethics of femininism. It teaches submissive humiliation, moderation, meekness, and often nonchalance; though, according to Lao-tze, these things are not prized for their intrinsic virtue, but as the means of attaining the end of self-preservation or self-affirmation. "I do not dare assume lordship, but the position of a guest. I do not dare advance an inch, but retreat a foot" (Chapter LXIX). "Man is tender and weak at his birth, he is stark and rigid when dead. All things and grasses and trees are tender and feeble at their birth, but when dead they are dry and sear. Therefore, those that are stark and rigid are followers of death. Those that are tender and weak are followers of life. Therefore, a strong army does not win, and a strong tree grows to decay. The strong and great are cowered, the tender and weak are uplifted" (Chapter LXXVI).

And again in Chapter LXXVIII,[48] says Lao-tze:

"There is nothing under the heavens that excels water in tenderness and weakness, yet there is nothing that surpasses it in efficiency when it attacks the hard and the strong. This is known to everybody that the strong is conquered by the weak, that the rigid is conquered by the tender."

In spite of this emphasis placed on passive and negative egotism, the ethics of Lao-tze is not lacking in noble thoughts such as characterize Buddhism and Christianity. By these I mean such passages as the following: "The holy man has no fixed thought of his own, he makes the wishes of his people his own. Good ones I meet with goodness; not-good ones I too meet with goodness; and thereby I gain goodness.[49] Faithful ones I meet with faith, not-faithful ones I too meet with faith; for thereby I gain faith" (Chapter XLIX). "Requite hatred with virtue" (Chapter LXIII). "I have a triple treasure. I hold this very precious. The first is compassion, the second is moderation, and the third is not to come in front before the world" (Chapter LXVII).

Anarchism.

Lao-tze's doctrine of passivity, when positively stated, is to let things follow their own natural bent without any interference from outside. Masses have an inherent tendency to gravitate toward the centre of the earth; men have an inborn desire to follow the course of the Tao, which is in them. Therefore, let

them alone, do not yoke them with unnecessary rules and formalities. Things that are imposed from without acquire unnaturalness, so that they are inevitably crippled. Lao-tze thus exclaims: "The more mandates and laws are enacted, the more there will be thieves and robbers" (Chapter LVII). And Chwang-tze agrees with him by saying that, "if an end were put to sageness, and wisdom put away, the great robbers would cease to arise; if jade were put away and pearls broken to bits, the small thieves would not appear" (Part II, Section III, "Chü Chieh"). To quote Lao-tze again: "When the great Tao is obliterated, we have humaneness and righteousness. Prudence and circumspection appear, and we have much hypocrisy. When family relations no longer harmonize, we have filial piety and parental love. When the country and the clans decay through disorder, we have loyalty and allegiance. Abandon your saintliness, put away your prudence, and the people will gain a hundredfold. Abandon your humaneness, put away your righteousness, and the people will return to filial piety and paternal love. Abandon your scheming, put away your gains, and thieves and robbers will no longer exist" (Chapter XVIII).

These are strong words, and smack not a little of anarchism. In truth, when the ethics of Lao-tze is carried out to its logical extreme, it results in nothing but absolute anarchism, though not in the sense of utter disorderliness. The Taoist metaphysicians of the

Ante-Ch'in period unanimously advocate the doctrine of non-resistance and non-interference. They want to return to the primitive stage of civilization, when there were no laws or regulations whatever. Everybody is supposed by them to have then enjoyed the utmost individual freedom and to have been as yet unconscious of abusing it at the expense of another. History, however, does not prove that there was such a golden age in the remote past, but that, on the contrary, the struggle for existence among various tribes as well as within one and the same tribe was a universal phenomenon. But the Taoists refused to take notice of the fact; probably they took it for granted, as many other Chinese thinkers did, that there existed in prehistoric times a universal peace and unbounded happiness. Even if they might have been induced to doubt it in one way or another, they were willing to ignore it, in order that they might remain charmingly spellbound by their imagination and visionary retrospect. An anarchistic state of things was thus made the highest ideal of individual as well as social life.

The following allegory culled from the Chwang-tze (Part II, Section VII) very ingeniously illustrates the significance of *wu wei* in the Taoist ethics: "The ruler of the Southern Ocean was Shu, the ruler of the Northern Ocean was Hu, and the ruler of the Centre was Chaos. Shu and Hu were continually meeting in the land of Chaos, who treated them very well. They consulted together how they might repay his

kindness, and said: 'Men all have seven orifices for the purpose of seeing, hearing, eating, and breathing, while this ruler alone has not one. Let us try and make them for him.' Accordingly they dug one orifice in him every day; and at the end of seven days Chaos died." Poor Chaos! If he had been left in his chaotic, undetermined, undifferentiated, and, therefore, necessarily inactive (*wu wei*) condition, which was indeed the *raison d'être* of his existence, he could have enjoyed a life of eternity and of perfect contentedness too. The unnecessary, though quite well-meant, interference of his neighbours permanently put an end to his very existence.

Whatever the Taoist world-shunning ethics, it was, after all, a creation of the Chinese mind. It never lost sight of its practical import; that is, it always showed a considerable interest in politics and state-administration. The reader might imagine that an ethical doctrine such as that of Lao-tze would not trouble itself with political affairs, which are merely a product of the worldly wisdom and artificiality despised so strongly by the Taoists. But no Chinese philosopher and moral teacher would ever think of ignoring the practical consequences of his theory. Indeed, the value of a theory had to be judged by its working utility in the daily life of man as an individual and as a member of society.

Lao-tze's theory with regard to the administration of state affairs, as can be expected, was a direct, un-

modified application of his *wu wei*, and might be called a *laissez faire* policy. Give the people as much freedom as they want; let them not be encumbered with artificial formalities and excrescent regulations; leave them alone as much as possible; if necessary, deprive them of all craftiness, cunning, and prudence which they have acquired since the initiation of artificialities, and lead them to a state of primitive innocence and absolute artlessness. This policy, according to Lao-tze, is understood to secure the peace and good order that used to prevail in the olden times of "cord-knotting" administration. The people would be delighted with whatever they have, simple and plain. They would die natural deaths when they were old. The cocks and dogs would happily voice their perfect contentment all around the country. And here we have a perfect state of things that ought to exist when the natural course of the Tao is faithfully followed (see "Tao Teh King," Chapter LXXX).

In the following, the reader will have the ideal kingdom of the Taoists: "While taking a nap, the Yellow Emperor dreamed that he was on a visit to the country of the Hua-hsü, which is situate west of the state of An and north of the state of Tai, and distant ever so many hundreds of thousands of miles from the Middle Kingdom. The Hua-hsü's country could not indeed be reached by boat or carriage or on foot; it could only be visited by a spirit. There was no ruler or chief in this country, which was left to its

own fate. The people had no special desires or appetites, they were living naturally. They did not know how to grow attached to life nor how to abhor death; therefore, there was no premature death among them. They did not know how to be egotistic and how to neglect others; therefore they were free from the feelings of love and hate. They did not know what was meant by being in accord with a thing or out of harmony with it; therefore they entertained no thought of partiality. They had nothing to long for, or to get attached to, nor had they anything to fear, or to recoil from. They went into water and were not drowned. They went into fire and were not scorched. Though whipped, they felt no pain; though scratched, they had no itching sensation. They rode through the emptiness of space as if treading on the solid ground; they slept in the air as if lying on a bed. The cloud and fog did not obstruct their sight, nor did thunder and lightning disturb their hearing, nor did beauty and ugliness affect their minds, nor did hills and valleys make their steps unsteady, for they walked as spirits" (Chapter II, "The Yellow Emperor").

The reader will here notice how radical is the difference between the ethics of Confucius and Lao-tze. Some sinologists ascribe this difference to climatic variation, the former representing the type of vigorous, industrious, and order-loving Northerners; while the latter that of care-free, visionary, impulsive

and often indolent Southerners. Under the pressure of the rigorous climate and inclement weather, the Northerners have to fight hard against nature. With them the letting-alone policy will result in the annihilation of their own existence. But the case is entirely different with the Southerners; to them nature does not mean a force that is unfavourable to them and therefore to be conquered. On the contrary, she is so bountiful that they can enjoy the fulness of life with hardly any toil. Non-resistance and non-interference are the best policy whereby they can deal with nature. For this reason, Confucius can be said to represent the Northern type, and Lao-tze the Southern. The history of Chinese thought and philosophy is the record of the struggles between these two rival conceptions, Taoism aided by Buddhism and frequently joined by popular superstition, and Confucianism generally strongly proving to be the more representative and indigenous to the Chinese mind.

Hedonistic Egoism.

The most rigorous expounder of hedonistic egoism in the history of Ante-Ch'in philosophy was Yang-tze. He seems to have been very influential at times, and his doctrine displayed a considerable force against Confucianism, and if it had not been for the eloquence of a great genius like Mencius, it might have been able to defy its opponents for a long while yet. Yang-tze's doctrine proves to what extent the nega-

tivistic egoism of Lao-tze can degenerate. Properly speaking, Yang-tze was not a philosopher at all. He was an eccentric soul, perhaps mortally wounded by some political disappointment and wrongfully guided by his natural pessimistic bent. His doctrine, if it be so called, was not a mature result of serious reflection, but rather the incoherent utterance of a mind cruelly in despair at the outlook of humanity. But the tolerance, nay, the popular acceptance which was accorded to the wild exclamations of Yang-tze, showed that the Chinese mind in this period was fertile, versatile, and ready to lend an ear to anything novel. Yang-tze's existence was possible only in those days. Had he appeared a few hundred years later, his sayings would have been forever buried in oblivion.

Yang-tze, or Yang Chou, which is his proper name, did not leave any work of his own. Perhaps he did, but we do not know of its existence. All the data we have to-day of his life and utterances are contained in the Lieh-tze, the Mencius, the Chwang-tze,[50] and the Han-fei-tze.[51] From these it appears that Yang Chou was a younger contemporary of Lao-tze, and from him he seems to have received some instruction concerning life and virtue, which was somehow similar to that given to Confucius. It is, therefore, but natural that we can trace in Yang Chou's hedonism a distinct echo of Lao-tze's ethics of self-complacency. In the latter was a prevailing tone of quiet negativism,

but in Yang Chou we have a positive insistence on ultra-egoism. Sharing with the Taoists the ascetic spirit, he did not teach sensual debauchery as a principle, yet what he is considered to have taught sometimes verges dangerously near it. There is no reason, however, to believe that the author himself was a man of loose morals. He was a recluse disgusted with the world and its artificialities. And he was a satirist, too. When he is seen in this light, his doctrine is not so offensive and despicable as it is charged to be by the Confucians.

The ground principle of Yang-tze's egoism[52] is, negatively, to shirk all the artificial restraints that are calculated to bridle the natural impulses of man, be they high or low, and, positively, to let him go back to a state of primitive naïveté and enjoy his blessed life to the full extent of his emotional capacity.[53] Yang-tze, therefore, looks down on the Confucian doctrine of humaneness and righteousness as something forced upon human nature and not innate to it. The object of life is not to yoke ourselves to moral pillories such as were imposed by the Confucians, merely in order that posterity might have a good opinion of us. The object of life is to give the freeest rein to our nature and gratify it to the utmost. For is not life short? and is not this short life even encumbered with all kinds of cares and worry? Subtract from a man's life the years of babyhood and senility, and its half is gone. Then

take away hours of sleep, and there remains only one-fourth of the entire length of our life, which rarely reaches the one hundred-year mark. But is this one-fourth filled with unalloyed joy and happiness? By no means, for are there not so many unnecessary things that threaten to cut off even this remaining fraction of life? Desires are consuming our corporeal strength; social traditions are crippling our moral simplicity; national prejudices are strangling freedom of action; laws and regulations are muzzling the expression of natural sentiments. Under these intolerable encumbrances, how could we spend lightheartedly even the mere fraction of life that is granted to us? Therefore, says Yang-tze, let us abandon all things that are external and superfluous, and let us enjoy our natural, unhampered life to its full limits. People of olden times were perfectly aware of the shortness of life and wanted to make the best of it. They lived as their simple, innocent impulses dictated. Their desire was to preserve the naïveté or integrity of their nature. They never worried themselves about things earthly. They never distorted or mutilated what they obtained from heaven merely for the acquisition of things artificial. They were above political intrigues, aspiration for fame, commercial greed, and other petty human concerns.

This self-abandoned indifference and transcendentalism distinctly echoes the teaching of Lao-tze. But

Yang-tze was not a mere quietist. He sometimes actually endorses debauchery of the worst kind. His almost unconditional egoism does not allow him to extend his sphere of interest either to his fellow-beings that are thriving around him or to those that are to come after him. He is utterly indifferent to matters concerning others. He stands absolutely alone. He does not condescend to identify himself with other fellow-individuals. Therefore, he scoffs at such men of virtue as Shun,[54] Yü,[55] Chou Kung,[56] and Kung Fu-tze (Confucius), who are universally revered by the Chinese; he picks them out as examples of most unnatural men who worried and deformed themselves merely for the sake of a good name. Yang-tze, on the other hand, praises Chou[57] and Chieh[58]—the type of infamy and depravity—as men who had courage and even virtue to behave as their natural impulses dictated. What did it matter to them if they now stand for everything that is disgusting in man? They who are so vehemently condemned by posterity as well as such virtuous men as Shun and Confucius,—are they not all gone forever and aye? Are not their bones crumbling, their flesh and blood already mingling in the dust? Let posterity say of them whatever it pleases, both the censured and the praised are absolutely insensible. Honour or dishonour, are they not like bubbles on water? Why not enjoy all that is enjoyable while alive? Begone! our doctrinaires,

hypocrites, unnatural moralists, and vain aspirants after fame!

"How then is our life to be lived?[59]

"Indulge in what your ear desires to hear; indulge in what your eye desires to see; indulge in what your nose desires to smell; indulge in what your mouth desires to speak; indulge in what your body desires to obtain; and indulge in what your mind desires to do.

"Now, sound is what the ear desires to hear, and when it is denied, it means the crippling of the auditory sense. Things beautiful are what the eye desires to see, and when these are denied, it means the crippling of the visionary sense. Perfume is what the nose desires to smell, and when this is denied, it means the crippling of the olfactory sense. Judgment is what the mouth desires to speak, and when this is denied, it means the crippling of intelligence. Delicious food and warm clothing are what the body desires to have, and when these are denied, it means the crippling of the sense of comfort. Freedom is what the mind desires to have, and when this is denied, it means the crippling of one's nature.

"All these cripplings are so many unnatural self-restraints, and he that has the fixed thought to do these, is molesting himself, is torturing himself. If you cast away the thought of self-molestation, and lightheartedly and joyously indulge your passions and

desires, and giving yourself up to the pursuit of pleasure calmly await the coming of death, your life of one day is equal to another's life of one month, and your life of one year to another's life of ten years. This is the way I take care of my life. Those who are yoked to the thought of self-molestation may have a long life of one hundred, ten hundred, even of ten thousand years, in a depressed state of mind, but what is the use of all that? It is not my way of taking care of life."

When judged from these passages alone, Yang-tze may appear a crass sensualist, a most vigorous libertine; but in other places we come across the typical Lao-tze doctrine of *wu wei* or the world-fleeing spirit of some Hindu philosophers.

"The reason why men are restive is due to four things: (1) longevity; (2) fame; (3) social position; and (4) wealth. People crave these things, and therefore they fear spiritual beings, their fellow-citizens, influences from unknown regions, and the punishment of the civil laws. They are called irrational and disobeying Heaven. Such people could be killed or saved at will by others, for they are not masters of themselves.

"Those who obey heavenly orders have no desire for longevity beyond the limit set by Heaven. They have no craving for fame as they have no thought of displaying their worth. They have no desire for social rank as they have no thought of abusing their

power. They have no desire for wealth as they are free from avarice. These people are called 'obedient.' The obedient people do not long for worldliness; they are independent, self-complacent; they are far above things earthly; they have destiny in their own hands and are free from all outward interference."

Taking all in all, Yang-tze is not a debauchee, but a self-contented, artless, simple-minded child of nature. He hates all kinds of inordinate excess and artificiality. He wants to live as he came from the bosom of eternity. He has not the slightest craving for sensual pleasures beyond the demands of nature. He feels hungry, and eats a morsel of coarse bread, and is satisfied. He is cold, and puts on one more woollen tunic, and is comfortable. He is a fatalist. He calmly greets death. He has no desire for immortality, either in life or after death. In these respects he deeply breathes the spirit of Lao-tze.

Whatever the merits and faults of his extreme doctrine, he occupies a unique position in Chinese philosophy. In his days and immediately after his death, he seems to have had quite a sway over Chinese minds as we read in Mencius (toward the end of Book VI): "As a sage-king does not rise, the lords and dukes are unrestrained, irresponsible scholars go too far in their discussion, and the doctrines of Yang Chou and Mu Ti are rampant everywhere. When the general public is not swayed by Yang, it is swayed by Mu. Yang is so egotistic

as to ignore the existence of a ruler; and Mu is so ultra-altruistic as to ignore the existence of the parents. But when we do away with the ruler and parents, we shall all be the beasts."

Utilitarianism.

Almost all Chinese ethical doctrines are more or less characterized by a strong utilitarian tendency, for practicality is the key that opens one of the main entrances to the Chinese mind. But there are, too, other moral traits predominant and peculiar to them. For instance, filial devotion is practically the corner-stone of later Confucianism; ceremonialism also occupies a conspicuous part in Chinese life; and lastly, there is a persistent assertion of conservative spirit in all their doings, and this spirit naturally makes the Chinese great lovers of peace. As all these racial characteristics have claimed their due consideration in the system of their national philosophy, their utilitarian tendency had to be modified to a certain extent. Therefore, it is a matter of self-evidence that we recognize in Confucianism a harmonious blending of all the predominant traits of the Chinese mind; for, otherwise, it would have been neglected like so many other doctrines, and would not have filled the position which it has held almost without interruption since its first establishment. The doctrine I am going to consider, on the other hand, overlooked the importance of all the

Chinese peculiarities other than utilitarianism and practicality. It unduly emphasized this phase, which necessarily resulted in an utter disregard of all other things.[60] The doctrine is commonly known as ultra-altruism in contradiction to the ultra-egoism of Yang-tze; but, properly speaking, its fundamental principle is utilitarianism pure and simple. It also contains many conceptions which are closely similar to Christianity, and it is very probable that if it were fostered amongst a people who were more idealistic, imaginative, and above all religious, it might have developed into a system almost like Christianity.

The author of this interesting doctrine is Mu Ti, or Mu-tze as he is more generally known. Records vary as to his nativity and age, but the probability is that he was a younger contemporary of Confucius and flourished about the time when most of his immediate disciples were gone. His home seems to have been in the south and not in the north. He held an official position like every other learned man in the country. The work[61] now in our possession consists of fifty-three books or chapters. Originally there were more books in it. It seems most of the fifty-three books were written by his personal disciples after his death; but some of them are utterly unintelligible to us to-day, owing to textual discrepancies and corruptions.[62] Many desperate attempts were made to adjust them, but practically to no purpose. The other parts, however, which are

free from obscurity, show in many respects a clear logical mind on the part of the author—something unusual in Chinese philosophers.

The ideal of Mu Ti is universal peace and universal prosperity. Whatever his teachings, they are all intended to bring about this state of things. He declares that the business of the holy man consists in promoting peace among his people, in developing all the resources of nature, and in avoiding all the possible causes of evils that befall our community. It is wonderful to notice how modern are these views of the old Chinese philosopher, Mu Ti. He asks: "Why is the existing state of things far from this ideal?" "Because," answers he, "everybody esteems his own self above others." The strong usurp the rights of the weak, the crafty take advantage of the ignorant, officers abuse their power over the unprotected, and powerful states absorb the helpless. For these reasons, we are constantly in a state of war, individual with individual, family with family, clan with clan, and state with state. This cannot be the destiny of humanity as ordained by the will of heaven, which is our ultimate source of authority. Let one love another as one's own self, let a nation love another as its own, let a sovereign love his subjects as himself, let the son love his parents as himself, let everybody love everybody else as himself. Then there will be no traitors who love themselves at the expense of the state to which they belong; there

will be no tyrant who ignores the welfare of his subjects; no robbery, no enmity, no inhumanity; in fact, there will be no evil that will disturb universal peace ensuing from this practice of universal love (Chapters XIV and XV).

How is the principle of universal love and mutual benefit justified? Mu Ti argues that there are three methods of testing the soundness of a principle. First, it must conform to the will of heaven and be in accordance with the doings of ancient sages; secondly, our daily experiences must justify it; and thirdly, when it is made into a law and practised among the people, it must prove an agent for the general welfare [63] (Chapters XXXVI and XXXVII). Mu Ti proceeds to prove all these points in this way. Heaven created the sun, moon, and innumerable stars. It regulates their courses, and the four seasons follow in order—spring and autumn, winter and summer. It sends forth thunder and lightning, rain and snow. Warmed by them the five cereals and other nourishing and useful plants grow. People avail themselves of these heavenly gifts. Again, there are mountains covered with all useful trees and stored with all wealth-producing metals. People transform them for their own service and make themselves comfortable in every way. Again, there are sovereigns and wise men specially favoured by heaven. They make laws and administer to the needs of the people; the wicked are punished, the ignorant are enlightened, and pros-

perity is secured. Do not all these things come from the will of heaven? Do not all these things come to everybody without discrimination? Why, then, heaven must be considered the source of love and righteousness, and our duty on earth is but to follow this will and practise universal love and mutual benefit (Chapter XXVII).

And was this not also the teaching and practice of the ancient sages?

Our daily experiences teach us the same lesson. Those who love are loved, those who hate are hated If we benefit others, they are glad to return the favour; if we rob them of what is due to them, they will be ready to requite in a similar way. This is what we observe all around us (Chapter XIV).

If we make this heavenly will the principle of administration, the sovereign will be beneficent, the subject loyal, the father kindhearted, the child filial, the elder brother friendly, and the younger dutiful. Good or evil, the source of influence is from above. There was once a king who admired a slender waist, and every woman in the state deprived herself of necessary food. There was another king who delighted in muscular strength, and every youth in the state devoted himself to all kinds of athletic exercises. Therefore nobody can tell to what extremity the masses will rush when an example is shown by the privileged classes. Let the sovereign and his officers exercise the will of heaven as it is manifested about us,

and the entire nation will at once endeavour to follow the model set up by them. Universal peace and eternal prosperity will then inevitably be the outcome (Chapter XV).

The real issue of Mu Ti's doctrine, however, seems to lie more in its utilitarian aspect than in its humanistic side. This can be seen from his economic views which brought about the vehement accusation[64] of the Confucians, resulting in the final downfall of his whole system. He rigorously opposed the prevalence of luxurious habits as to dwelling, clothing, eating, and travelling; and he also condemned the custom of concubinage. They are all the unproductive consumption of wealth; so much is spent, and nothing material is gained thereby. The real happiness of the masses does not consist in the encouragement of luxury, but in the production of wealth.

The custom of concubinage naturally results in the overproduction of bachelors as well as old maids—the fact will eventually threaten the growth of population. (Is it not interesting to note that the sole ground of Mu-tze's objection to concubinage is that of practical, material consideration, and not a moral and social one ?)

On the same ground, Mu Ti objected to Confucian sentimentalism. The Chinese always cherished a very deep reverence for their ancestors, and lost no opportunity to show the feeling in public. Their burial ceremony, therefore, was naturally of the most

elaborate character. There was a strong tendency among the poor as well as the rich to go beyond their means, in order to express or make a show of the deepest reverence and sympathy for the deceased. We learn from modern travellers that there are in China some professional mourners who are hired by real mourners to make their funeral procession appear more mournful by their simulating show of lamentation. The Chinese of olden times perhaps did not take such an extreme step to make a public exhibition of their grief; at least we are not in possession of any documents to prove this. But they were certainly ready to acknowledge the highest type of filial devotion in those who remained in mourning for at least three years for their deceased parents. During this long period[65] they lived a most secluded life; they retired from public offices if they held any; they did not attend to any commercial transaction; they refrained from participating in any public or private festivals. They remained at home like prisoners or religious recluses, fixing all their pious thoughts on the memory of the deceased. This was what was generally endorsed by the followers of Confucianism as a pious expression of filial devotion; and this was what was most strenuously opposed by Mu Ti (see "Mu Ti," Chapter XXV).

His objections were on the whole sound and well-grounded. He demonstrated that there was no sense in wasting wealth on such unproductive things as

funerals: that such a protracted observation of mourning tended to paralyze the administration of the government, and to check the progress of industry and commerce. It is altogether unnecessary to wrap a corpse in extra clothes, to put it in an extraordinarily strong coffin, and to inter it in an unduly deep grave. All we have to consider in these matters is the practical end which they are intended to serve. Mu Ti was a thorough utilitarian, and refused to yield to any sentimental extravagances. He did not disregard the significance of sentiment; he was willing to pay due regard to it, but he could not bear to see the national and individual wealth scattered to the winds for the sake of mere sentimentalism.

It is, therefore, no wonder that Mu Ti was also against music [66] (Chapter XXXII) and vigorously condemned war (Chapters XVII, XVIII, and XIX). In his opinion, music did not add an iota to the national wealth and prosperity; and as to war, it was simply abominable; every trade and industry comes to a standstill, and every sense of justice and righteousness is thereby hopelessly benumbed. At any rate, anything that will disturb the peace of a nation and destroy its productive facilities is mercilessly attacked by Mu Ti.

A fatalistic doctrine which seems to have been prevalent in his days could also not escape his condemnation. According to him, fatalism was a great obstacle in the way of industry and prosperity. If the people

were abandoned to the so-called fate which is predetermined and beyond human control, there would be no incentive to urge them to work, produce wealth, and preserve permanent peace. On the other hand, everybody would remain perfectly passive and utterly inactive, leaving everything to the pre-established order of things as regulated in the beginning of Unknown Destiny. This state of things could never be suffered to exist in this world of striving. Mu Ti was a strong advocate of the untiring energy and strenuous life. In him we see the practical tendency of the Chinese mind singularly emphasized, though at the expense of their love of formalism and ceremonialism (see Chapters XXXV, XXXVI, and XXXVII).

Finally, what is significant in Mu Ti is his conception of *t'ien*, which means literally "heaven," but can be freely translated by "God" even in the Christian sense. The difference between the Christian God and Mu Ti's Heaven (*t'ien*) is that while the former made the conception of God foremost and its worship the paramount issue of the religious life, the latter conceded the first place to utilitarianism, for the execution of which the God-idea became necessary to him. It will no doubt be very interesting to consider at length Mu Ti's conception of Heaven in its connection with his doctrine of universal love, which is so closely akin to Christianity. This will be done later when the religious side of Chinese thought claims our attention (see p. 147 *et seq.*).

Ceremonialism.

As one might have expected, there was a virulent attack upon the ultra-utilitarianism of Mu Ti. The Chinese love of ceremony and their strong sentiment of ancestor-worship prevented them from giving themselves up to philosophical simplicity or making an unconditional surrender to utilitarianism. This antagonistic spirit found its spokesman in Hsün-tze,[67] who flourished several decades later than Mencius. He left a work consisting of thirty-two books or chapters. He was not so brilliant a genius as his predecessors, Mencius and Chwang-tze, but for a Chinese philosopher of those days his method of reasoning was singularly sound and systematic. (So far as I know, there exists no English translation of the "Hsün-tze.")

The Confucians of later days treat Hsün-tze as if he were a stepson not properly belonging to the orthodox lineage of Confucianism. This is mainly due to his doctrine of the innate badness of human nature, which he forcefully set forth against the opposite view held by Mencius. Since Han Yü (A.D. 768-824), an eminent scholar and writer of the T'ang dynasty, pronounced Mencius, in place of Hsün-tze, as the transmitter of the orthodox Confucian teachings at the end of the Ante-Ch'in period, Hsün-tze lost his legitimate position and consideration in the eyes of the general public. But from a scholarly point of

view, he is entitled, not a whit less than his eloquent predecessor, Mencius, to a prominent place in the development of Confucianism.

From the historical point of view, what Hsün-tze did for Confucianism was to emphasize its ceremonial side, while Mencius strongly developed its humanistic side. In the Confucian "Analects" itself, it is sometimes doubtful whether the Master means to give more importance to ceremonialism (*li*, 禮) or to humanheartedness (*jên*, 仁). His almost congenital fondness for rituals and ceremonies was so remarkable that it caused his biographers to record that "In his childhood Confucius used to play with the sacrificial bowls and dishes which he arranged with due formalities." In Book X of the "Analects" the reader will notice how carefully and minutely is described the Master's every manner and behaviour on different occasions, as if he were the living embodiment of all that was proper in life. The main motive of his interview with Lao-tze was to inquire about ceremonial usages, formally recorded or not, which were kept in the archives of the Chou dynasty, of which Lao-tze was the custodian. And his contemporaries seem to have acknowledged him as authority on matters sacrificial and ceremonial.

Confucius was an ardent advocate of ceremonialism, not only in its outward expressions, but in its morally edifying effects on character. In the same sense Pascal urged a strict observance of all the church

rituals as finally conducive to the development of piety and a Christian disposition. Confucius deplored the universal decline of the ceremonial spirit in his days, and did not miss the opportunity to declare his disapproval. If such a powerful, brilliant, and extraordinary person as Mencius had not followed Confucius and emphatically proclaimed the ethical subjective, and humanitarian phase of his doctrine, Hsün-tze, promoter of ceremonialism, instead of the eloquent Mencius, would have been recognized as the representative of the orthodox school of Confucianism.

What was most fatal to the popularity of Hsün-tze was perhaps due to his radical view of human nature, which, in contrast to Mencius, he considered essentially bad, and which, therefore, needed correction through the rules of propriety, for these were especially invented for this purpose by the ancient sages.

But, strictly speaking, this unflattering conception of human nature was not of so much importance to Hsün-tze as his ceremonialism. His object was to give a philosophical foundation to his ethics, and this he based on the crookedness of humanity which needs rectification. Like other Chinese thinkers, Hsün-tze always kept before his eyes the practical side of his philosophy. His object was to lead people to the path of perfect virtue; and to attain it, ceremonialism was introduced as the best means. It was not of much consequence, practically considered, whether humanity in its innate constitution was theoretically

bad or good; the main thing was to follow the Confucian codes of morality. And in the course of this study, we might say, he incidentally found out that human nature was not good after all as claimed by Mencius; for if it were, he reasoned, why did it ever need rectifying through moral discipline and the rules of propriety?

Says Hsün-tze: "Every one has inborn desires. When these desires are not satisfied, he looks around for the objects [of satisfaction]. When no measure and limits are set to this searching, there necessarily arises quarreling. Quarreling means disturbance, and disturbance obstruction. Wise men of old hated this disturbance; therefore, they established rules of propriety and justice, and imposed them upon the people. Their desires were thus regulated and their requirements thus furnished. Every desire was not allowed to be satisfied, nor every satisfaction to lead to a new one. The equilibrium between them was constantly kept under control. This is the beginning of the proprieties."[68]

From this, it is apparent that Hsün-tze considered society an artificial institution. When men were left to themselves, they fought against one another, for each endeavours to have his own desires satisfied without any regard to his neighbour's. But somehow it occurred to the mind of a wise man that this constant disturbance was not a very desirable state of affairs. The people must be put together in groups,

and to insure peace among them some definite checks must be placed on their never-satiated desires. He knew that this procedure was against their nature, that those checks meant the curbing of their wild desires and impulses, that this was an artificial invention (偽, *wei;* literally, human doing) contrary to the innate badness of human nature. Therefore, the holy man, according to Hsün-tze, was no more than a perfected type of artificiality. The difference between him and the masses was not due to the difference of their innate character, but to the artificial refinement that is given to the original raw material.

Here comes the most pronounced difference between Hsün-tze and other Confucians in their practical system of moral discipline. Tze Ssu (grandson of Confucius), Tsêng-tze (one of the Confucian apostles), Mencius, and other principal Confucians show a unanimous tendency to lay more importance on the inner significance of 仁, *jên,* humanism, and 敬, *ching,* reverence, considering the rules of propriety as a natural outward growth of the inner sentiment. But Hsün-tze did not believe in the goodness of human nature, and could not rely on its self-cultivation. To use modern terms, he strongly believed in the overwhelming influence of environment in shaping a man's character and destiny. The human mind was not a blank sheet of paper on which anything could be modelled. It was, on the contrary, a very rough

substance which needed the most careful handling and systematic remodelling. Rigid rules of propriety artificially laid down by the wise men of old had to be applied to the original raw material, hewing off all its ruggedness, and smoothly polishing it up to a required shape.

"Therefore," says Hsün-tze, "human nature is the original foundation and raw material, while artificiality (*wei*) means refinement and culture. If not for the original nature, artificiality would have nothing to apply itself to; and if not for artificiality, the original nature would fail to polish itself. Through the co-operative adjustment of the two, we have a class of people called the wise, and the consolidation of the empire is thereby effected. Therefore, I say that as all things are created through the union of heaven and earth, and as all changes take place through the contact of the male and the female principle, the peace of the empire is obtained through the co-operative adjustment of the original nature and artificiality" (Chapter XIX, "Li lun p'ien").

It is, then, by this artificial remodelling of the original baseness of humanity that the hungry could be persuaded to give precedence to the older, the tired to endure their hardships, brothers to agree in the distribution of their ancestral property, and the people to show due consideration even to strangers; for all these excellent behaviours are not a spon-

taneous exhibition of the sentiment as harboured in the heart of the natural man, but they must be ascribed to the beautiful artificial influence of ceremonialism (*li i*).[89]

If other Confucians are to be classified as upholders of subjectivism, Hsün-tze was no doubt a decided proclaimer of objectivism. He did not believe in evolving goodness from within, but in grafting it from without. He did not believe in the cultivation of the altruistic impulse called the feeling of fellowship or humaneness (*jên*), but in the muzzling of egotism by some artificial method. When we remember what powerful factors are traditions and the instinct of imitation in the upbuilding of society, it is undeniably true that Hsün-tze's objective method of moral training, however one-sided, is conducive in many cases to the making of a higher moral character.

Ceremonies, formulas, and rules prescribed by religion or tradition, are the natural outward manifestations of some inner sentiments felt by the wise and virtuous men of ancient times and by all following generations sanctioned as elevating and hallowing. When those established rules are reversed in order, and, instead of letting them come from within, are forced upon a human heart from without, it can logically be expected that they will produce in the receiving organ similar sentiments and impulses to those that stirred within ancient men of piety and virtue. The human heart is made of so many sus-

ceptible strings, and each of them responds to a certain note. If they are not strong and original enough to vibrate automatically from within, they can be made to act in a definite way by some mechanical means from without. And that is the psychology of ceremonialism.

In one sense the view of the later Confucians who find in Hsün-tze a seed of heterodoxy can be justified, for he opposed the idealistic undercurrent in Confucianism which was very precious to most of its adherents. Says Hsün-tze: "Moral training cannot gain a step by mere retrospection; let a man studiously apply himself to [practical] discipline [or study].[70] One whole day spent in meditation does not equal in merit one minute of [practical] study. We may stand a-tip-toe as high as possible; but it is far better to go up to some height and look round far and wide. Climb up higher and wave your hands; your arms have not gained an inch, but they are seen from afar. Raise your voice in the direction of the wind; it is not necessarily strong, but it can be heard distinctly. Wise men do not differ in their nature from others. What makes them wise is due to their adaptation to environment. Therefore, wise men are particular in choosing their place of dwelling and their associates, for things are grouped according to their congeniality. Let us study all the records bequeathed by our ancient sages and practise them in our daily life. What is the most essential of all things, however, is the study

and observance of rules of propriety. This is the consummation of all studies and the culmination of all virtues."[71] As to the study and importance of the canonical books, Hsün-tze was in perfect agreement with all the other Confucians. But he considered the book of ceremonies or proprieties to be of special significance. There are, generally speaking, two opposite tendencies in the history of philosophy, one is subjectivism and the other objectivism. In the Chinese history of thought, Hsün-tze represented the latter, and strongly emphasized the importance of ceremonial formalities.

It is, therefore, quite in keeping with his general principle that again in opposition to Mu-tze, he laid great emphasis on the importance of music. Mu-tze saw in music its economical unproductiveness only, and ignored its soothing and refining effect on the sentiment. Hsün-tze was always bent on cultivating the character by all possible external means, among which music must be considered one of the most potent.[72] In this respect Hsün-tze certainly voiced one of the sentiments remarkably characteristic of the Chinese. One of the main reasons, however, why they did not favour him so much as Mencius, is, as said before, owing to his peculiar conception concerning the original nature of humanity. Whatever selfish and bestial impulses and thoughts we may betray in our daily intercourse with our fellow-creatures, we are innately inclined not to conceive ourselves as radi-

cally base in character, and to consider goodness as something artificial (*wei*). Our fundamental belief, though at first unconscious, is that we are capable as well of absolutely disinterested impulses and thoughts and actions. And our experiences prove that our faith in ourselves, though subjectively formulated at the beginning, stands on some irrefutable objective facts. The Chinese, with their highly cultivated common sense, naturally shrank from Hsün-tze's conception of human nature, while in other points he was a spokesman of their characteristic sentiments.

Another factor that tends to prejudice Hsün-tze in the eyes of the Chinese public, lies perhaps in his style of writing. What makes a thought acceptable generally, is not always determined by its genuine worth, but in many cases by the manner in which it is presented. For even a worn-out idea becomes agreeably acceptable when it is garbed in a new style. Hsün-tze stands in this respect far below Mencius. His reasoning was unusually powerful and exact and logical as compared with Mencius's,[73] but the style in which his thought was expressed was not so brilliant and eloquent and charmingly attractive as that of Mencius. It cannot be denied, as we see to-day, that the premises and conclusions of these two great ancient philosophers are defective and one-sided, and do not cover the entire field; but judging from their rhetorical effects, Mencius appeals more irresistibly even to

readers of these latter days; and it is no wonder that intellectual Hsün was treated by his compatriots as though he were without the pale of the holy teaching of Confucius—Confucius who, to the people of the Middle Kingdom, was the ultimate authority in matters moral and religious.

RELIGION

Under this heading will be discussed the conception of God or Shang Ti 上帝 in the Five Canonical Books (*Wu Ching*), especially in the "Shu" and the "Shih," both of which may be considered to embody the gist of popular philosophy in early China. The reason why I confine myself to these classical documents is because every religious attitude manifested by the Chinese towards God is to be found in them, and I might almost say, only in them. The philosophers, on the other hand, including the Confucians, the Taoists, and others, seem to have had nothing especially to do with the worship of God. Perhaps one solitary exception was Mu-tze, who has some special chapters in his book devoted to the subject. In fact, there is a very definite line of demarcation between these two representative groups of writings, the classics and the philosophical works. The first are religious in the proper sense of the word, while the latter are practical, moral, and rationalistic, or sometimes highly speculative, as is the case with the Taoist books.

The earliest Chinese notion of God was more or less

personal; the relation that obtained between Heaven (*t'ien* 天)[74] and mankind on earth, was to a certain degree intimate and mutually responsive; whenever misfortune visited the people they were sure to cry to Heaven as the source of mercy and repent of their wickedness. But when the philosophical mind began to make inquiries, Heaven lost its emotional, religious relations to the creatures below; for it became more and more impersonal until it finally came to represent a mere sum of natural laws which required no special humouring, as it were. *T'ien* came to be used in the sense of rationality, and almost entirely replaced by 帝 *ti* (Lord),[75] or 上帝 *shang ti* (Lord on high), a term fully suggesting a personal agent.[76]

That in ancient times the Chinese had in their minds a being, of power, or even a person that governed mortals below, is gathered from the terms (Lord, August Heaven, Pitying Heaven, etc.) so liberally and religiously used in the "Shu Ching," "Shih Ching," "Yih Ching," and "Li Ki"—especially in the first two canonical books. In what follows an attempt will be made to illustrate the attitude of the early Chinese towards this *shang ti* as well as the attributes under which he was conceived.

(1) In the first place, Heaven (*t'ien*) was compassionate, as is known from one of its common attributes, 旻 *min*, "pitying." Whenever the early Chinese suffered, they called upon Heaven for protection and commiseration; they found consolation in their distress

by addressing Heaven as their parent. When the early Chinese settlement was still struggling hard with wild and barbarous neighbours, with those San Miao tribes who rebelled repeatedly against Chinese rule, the Chinese authorities thought it expedient to appeal to the religious sentiment of the wild Miao and to call God to their help. So we read in the "Counsels of the great Yü," in the "Shu Ching" (Part II, Book II): "At the end of three decades, the people of Miao rebelled against the commands, when Yi came to the help of Yü, saying, 'It is virtue only that moves Heaven; there is no distance to which it does not extend. Fulness invites loss, humility receives increase—this is the way of Heaven. In the early time of Tî[77] when he was living by Mount Li, he went into the fields, cried daily to Pitying Heaven, and to his parents, taking upon himself all guilt and charging himself with their wickedness. Reverently attending to his duties, he appeared before Kû Sâu with respectful humility; he looked grave and awestruck, till Kû Sâu also became transformed by his example. Entire sincerity moves the spirits,[78] how much more will it move the rulers of Miao!'"[79]

Under King Li (878-828 B.C.) of the Chou dynasty, a courtier was slandered and disgraced. He did not know where to appeal for vindication but to Heaven, who looked upon human affairs with parental sympathy. He composed a poem and thus addressed Heaven: "O Great and Distant Heaven, who art

called our parent,[80] why should I without crime or offence suffer from disorders so great! The terrors of Great Heaven are excessive, but indeed I have committed no crime. The terrors of Great Heaven are excessive, but indeed I have committed no offence" ("Shih Ching," II, V, 4; Legge, p. 361).

Mang-tze, a chief of eunuchs, became a victim of slander, whereupon he cried to Heaven, bitterly denouncing his enemies: "The proud are delighted and the troubled are in sorrow. O Azure Heaven! O Azure Heaven! Look on these proud men; pity those who are troubled" ("Shih," II, V, 6).

2. Since Heaven is compassionate, it is Heaven that showers blessings upon humankind. The early Chinese were quite simple-hearted. Whenever their hearts overflowed either in grief or in joy, they, like every other primitive people, made Heaven their last refuge. When the Chou dynasty came to full sovereignty through the successful achievements of its earlier rulers, T'ai Wang, T'ai Pe, Wang Chi, and through the subjugation of Mi and Ts'ung by King Wên, they ascribed this to the special grace of Heaven shown to the House of Chou, and for which the poet was made to sing the virtues of the kings and to thank Heaven in the following lines: "Great is the Lord on high, beholding this lower world in majesty. He surveyed the four quarters, seeking for some one to give establishment to the people. Those two earlier dynasties had failed to satisfy him with

their government; so throughout the various states, he sought one on whom he might confer the rule. Hating all the great states, he turned his attention to the West, and gave a settlement [to King T'ai] " ("Shih" III, I, 7; Legge, p. 389).

This idea of heavenly bliss is also expressed in a much earlier ode of the Shang dynasty (1766-1123 B.C.). The piece is a sort of hymn sung to the spirit of the founder of the dynasty, T'ang the Perfect. First, it alludes to his virtuous life, offerings are made, he is asked to partake of them and to bless his descendants. Then it describes the feudal princes coming to celebrate the festival ("Shih," IV, V, 2): "With the hubs of their wheels bound with leather, and their ornamented yokes, with the eight bells at their horses' bits all tinkling, [the princes] come to assist at the offerings. We have received the appointment in all its greatness, and from Heaven is our prosperity sent down, fruitful years of great abundance. [Our ancestors] will come and enjoy [our offerings] and confer on us happiness without limit."

In another ode belonging to the same period, the virtue of T'ang the Perfect is described and praised as a special blessing bestowed upon him by Heaven: "He received the tribute of the states, small and large, and supported them as a strong steed [does its burden]:—so did he receive the blessings of Heaven. Everywhere he displayed his valour, unshaken, un-

moved, unterrified, unscared,—all dignities were united in him" ("Shih," IV, V, 4; Legge, p. 310).

This idea of heavenly bliss is also expressed by Chou Kung in his advice to his colleague, Shao Kung, who wanted to retire from the royal service. Alluding to the prosperous state which the Chou dynasty was then enjoying, the Duke of Chou says: "And the favour of Heaven has come to us so largely; it should be ours to feel as if we could not sufficiently respond to it" ("Shu," Part V, Book XVI, "The Prince Shih").

3. Not only bliss but curses also come from Heaven, when creatures below pay no regard to the moral laws as established by it. There are numerous passages in the "Shu" as well as the "Shih" in which sufferers most pitifully appeal to Heaven for rescue, sometimes even blaming Heaven for the misery which they endure. This is quite natural; for were it not for the existence of evils man would never become conscious of a power above him. To quote only a few of the many lamentations addressed to Heaven by the early Chinese: "Great Heaven is not just to send down these dire calamities; Great Heaven is not merciful to send down these miseries. . . . O Unpitying Great Heaven, there is no end to disorder! With every month it continues to grow so that the people have no rest" ("Shih," II, IV, 7).[81] "Great and Far-reaching Heaven, how is it thou hast not extended thy benevolence, but sendest down ruin

and famine, and bringest about desolation throughout the Empire? Pitying Heaven, quickened with wrath, hast thou no discrimination, no design? Leave unpunished those who sinned, for they have already suffered for their offences. But those who are without sin are also drawn into the general misfortune" ("Shih," II, IV, 10).[82] "Shou, King of Shang, does not reverence Heaven above, and inflicts calamities on the people below. . . . Great Heaven was moved with indignation" ("Shu," V, I).[83]

4. Heaven was thus considered to be in possession of full power over mankind. It showed mercy to those who were virtuous and obedient to the heavenly will; but woe unto those who deviated from its prescribed course; no one could resist or ignore heavenly displeasure. "The overpowering wrath of unfathomable Heaven is felt throughout the world below" ("Shih," II, V, 1).[84] "Right from the spring comes the water bubbling, revealing its depths—sorrow of my heart! Did it start only today? Why not in the days before me? Why not in the days after me? Incomprehensible Heaven, far and distant, is able to strengthen anything. Do not disgrace your ancestors, but save your posterity" ("Shih," III, III, 10).[85] "If you reverently obey, Heaven will favour and compassionate you. But if you do not reverently obey, you shall not only be deprived of your lands, but I will also carry to the utmost Heaven's inflictions upon your persons"

("Shu," V, XIV; Legge, p. 200). In this passage, which is taken from Chou Kung's address to the "Numerous Officers" of the Yin dynasty which he had just overthrown, we notice his most threatening attitude toward the survivors of the preceding dynasty. This is due to the conviction that he represents in his person the authorities above, according to which he was ordered to overturn the tyrannical government of Shang. This theocratic conception is traceable throughout in the history of China, to which further reference will be made later on.

5. Owing to the fact that sinners are liable at any time to be visited with heavenly judgments, the power above had to be revered and its decrees complied with. The poet Fang Peh, of the Chou dynasty, who mourns the prevailing misery of the people suffering from the reckless policy of King Yu, strongly urges the King and his counsellors to heed the wrath exhibited by Heaven: "Revere the wrath of Heaven, and dare not to make sport or be lax. Revere the ways of Heaven, and dare not to be wild and unruly. Great Heaven is bright and is with you wherever you go. Great Heaven is clear-sighted, and is with you wherever you wander" ("Shih," III, II, 10; Legge, p. 410). In the same spirit, King Wu addresses K'ang Shu who was about to be appointed Marquis of Wei, a former stronghold of the Shang dynasty: "Let us be reverent, let us be

reverent. The way of Heaven is evident, and its decree is not easy to follow. Say not that it is high, high above us. It ascends and descends around these people; daily overseeing us, it is wherever we are. . . . Oh! Fang, my little child, be reverent as if thy person were suffering from a disease; awesome though Heaven be, it yet helps the sincere" ("Shu," V, IX; Legge, p. 165 *ff.*).

6. Heaven is not only the symbol of power and energy, but that of wisdom, bright and illuminating. "High Heaven, so bright, the earth below lies in thy illuminating survey" ("Shih," II, VI, 3).[86] "Great Heaven is exceedingly bright" ("Shih," III, III, 2).[87] "The bright and illuminating Lord on high giveth us promise of a prosperous year" ("Shih," IV, II, 1).[88] "Great Heaven is bright and is with you in all your journeys. Great Heaven is clear-sighted and is with you in all your wanderings" ("Shih," III, II, 10).

7. Being intelligent and all-seeing, what is decreed by Heaven must be carried out by man who is no more than a mere instrument. The will of Heaven once declared is irrevocable, for it is the source of the moral laws and the standard of conduct. So, a poet[89] of the Chou dynasty again declares: "Look into the midst of the forest; there we find large faggots and small twigs. The people now in their sad condition look towards Heaven, vague and indefinite. Yet when its determination is fixed, there is no one whom it will not conquer. There is the great Lord on high,

and does he hate any one?" Duke Wu of Wei makes a rejoinder to this conviction when he says, "Great Heaven never errs" ("Shih," III, III, 2).[90] And this unerring decree of Heaven was ever kept in view by a wise ruler, who would never think of doing violence to his moral conscience as an expression of the heavenly will. The Chinese government in those earlier days, and perhaps even now to a certain extent, was a theocracy. So we read in the "Instructions" given to T'ai Chia by his aged teacher minister, Yi Yin ("Shu," IV, V; Legge, p. 95 *ff.*): "The former king kept his eye constantly on the manifest decrees of Heaven, and so maintained the worship of the spirits of heaven and earth, of those presiding over the land and the grain, and of those of the ancestral temple—all with sincere reverence. Heaven took notice of his virtue, and caused its great appointment to light on him that he should soothe and tranquillize the myriad regions." Again, in the "Great Announcement," which was issued by King Ch'eng of the Chou dynasty when he was at the point of undertaking a punitive expedition against some of his rebellious lords, the young King declares ("Shu," V, VII): "My work is as the servant of Heaven, which has assigned me this great task and laid the hard duty on my person. . . . I the little child dare not disregard the appointment of the Lord on high. . . . Oh! the clearly-intended will of Heaven is to be feared, it is to help my great inheritance" (Legge, p. 159).[91]

8. The moral relations that exist between men are so determined eternally by the ordinances of Heaven. Heaven is the source of moral authority. Those who are immoral commit sin against Heaven and cannot escape its retribution. It is always impartial and shows no favour in administering justice. So declares the poet Yin Chi Fu of the Chou dynasty in the reign of King Hsüan: "Heaven gave birth to the multitudes of the people; and wherever there are things they are governed by fixed laws. To delight in what is held by the people eternally normal, that is the highest virtue" ("Shih," III, III, 6). This notion of the heavenly origin of the moral laws is much more clearly and definitely stated in the "Shu Ching" (II, III) by Kao Yao, minister to Shun. Kao Yao says: "It is by the heavenly arrangement that we have a universal order here; and ours is to maintain properly the five orders; let us be sincere in these five. It is the heavenly ordinance that we have a regular proceeding here; and ours is to observe the five ceremonies; let us be constant. Through universal respect and united reverence, let there be a harmonious regulation. Heaven favours the virtuous; and there are five habiliments; let the five be clearly distinguished. Heaven punishes the guilty; and there are five punishments; let the five be in effect. In the affairs of administration—let us be earnest, let us be earnest" (*cf.* Legge, p. 55).

9. The moral laws were thus made by Heaven, and

eternally fixed; and it was the same authority that rewarded the just and punished the unjust. For Heaven was not only the author of the laws, but their executor, stern and inflexible. Therefore, whether or not the creatures here below were made happy, prosperous, and satisfied, depended upon their own conduct. If they obeyed the rules initiated by Heaven and practised goodness (*tê*), the Lord on high favoured them; but if they did not they were sure to suffer the consequence. There was no escape from this absolute law. Therefore, we read in the "Shu Ching" (IV, IV, "The Instructions of Yi"): "Only the Lord on high is not constant: on the good-doer He sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer He sends down all miseries. Do you but be virtuous, be it in small things [or large], and the myriad regions will have cause for rejoicing. If you be not virtuous, be it in large things [or small], it will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple" (Legge, p. 95). Yi Yin, the sage-minister, again expresses the identical idea in his discourse on "Absolute Virtue" ("Shu," IV, VI), which is also addressed to his charge T'ai Chia: "It was not that Heaven felt any partiality for the Lord of Shang; but Heaven comes to [him who practises] absolute virtue. It was not that Shang courted the favour of the lower people, but the people turned towards [him who practised] absolute virtue. Where there is absolute virtue, there is no undertaking that is not favourable. Where virtue contradicts itself,

there is no undertaking that is not unfavourable. Favour or disfavour does not wrongfully fall upon men: for Heaven sends down misfortune or prosperity according to their virtue" (*cf.* Legge, p. 101). In one word, "The heavenly way is to bless the good and to curse the dissolute" ("Shu," IV, III, "The Announcement of T'ang").

10. It thus goes without saying that Heaven knows no partiality whatever in conferring bliss or sending down calamity. The venerable Yi Yin again instructs his young king ("Shu," Part IV, Book V, Section C): "Oh! Heaven knows no favouritism. Only those who are reverent are favoured by it. The people have no special person whom they constantly cherish, they only cherish those that are benevolent. The spiritual beings have no special offerings which they are constant in accepting, thev only accept things that are offered with sincerity. The heavenly seat is indeed difficult to hold." Later, Chou Kung also utters the same sentiment when he is about to appoint his nephew Chung Hu to Lord Tsai ("Shu," V, XVII): "Great Heaven knows no favouritism. Only those who are virtuous are helped by it. The people's hearts know no constant attachment; only they cherish those that are benevolent."

11. As Heaven shows no partiality in its dealings with creatures on earth, the latter must always be on their guard so that they may not fall from the heavenly grace and suffer misery and ignominy.

Heaven can never be relied upon, it is not constant, it changes as a man changes in his virtuous conduct. And it is most difficult for him to be always upright and virtuous, and not to deviate even for a moment from the path prescribed by the Lord on high. Heaven's favours are the most difficult thing to be retained by us earthly creatures. The unreliability of the heavenly will, therefore, from the human point of view, is ever and again emphasized by the early Chinese moralists. Yi Yin's (who died 1713 B.C.) instruction to the young king T'ai Chia repeatedly refers to this idea; he seems never tired of reminding the inexperienced lest he let loose his youthful unbridled passions in his administration, thinking that the heavenly pleasure once shown to his father is constant and eternal regardless of his own conduct. "Oh!" says Yi Yin, "it is difficult to rely upon Heaven, for its decrees are not constant. But [let a ruler] be constant in his goodness, and he will preserve his throne. Let him be inconstant in his goodness, and the nine provinces will be lost to him" ("Shu," IV, VI; Legge, p. 101). Later, Chou Kung (d. 1105 B.C.) is also anxious to impress this idea on his colleague, Shao Kung: "The decrees of Heaven are not easily preserved, Heaven is difficult to be depended upon" ("Shu," V, XVI; Legge, p. 206). In the "Book of Odes" we find Chou Kung again referring to the utmost difficulty of securing the heavenly grace: for he sings in his commemoration of the father Wen

("Shih," III, I, 2): "The bright illumination [of virtue] here below; the stern authority [of God] there above. Heaven is not readily to be relied upon; it is no easy task to be a king. Yin's rightful heir to the heavenly seat was not allowed to govern the four quarters. . . . The King Wen gloriously served the Lord on high with watchfulness and reverence, and thus won numerous blessings. Since his virtue was never reversed, he enjoyed the allegiance of the states from all quarters. . . . The troops of Yin Shang assembled like a forest and marshalled on the wilds of Mu. We rose thereupon and [Shang Fu cried to the King Wen], 'The Lord on high is with thee, be not faint-hearted!'"

* * * * *

From these statements, it is apparent that the Chinese even in those early days had a conception of God, a Supreme Being, who presided over human affairs below, and that this conception was of a very high order; and at the same time the fact will strike an observant reader that the Chinese God is different in one essential point from the Hebrew God—that is, the former betrays no such personal intimacy as the latter does in the Old Testament. The Chinese are not such an intensely religious and fanatical people as the Hebrews, and naturally their conception of the highest authority of moral laws was not so personal and intimate as that of the Jews, though Shang Ti was personal enough in certain respects. Even in

their most religious documents in the "Shu Ching," they seem never to have given rein to their imagination so far as to depart from the bounds of common-sense morality. This will be shown in the following "Announcement of T'ang," who founded the Yin dynasty (1766-1154 B.C.). This imperial manifesto was issued by T'ang to justify himself before his subjects in the overthrow of the preceding dynasty and in the establishment of his own—a procedure sanctioned by Heaven.[92] In this we see the elevation of its moral tone, but not any particularly religious fervour. After T'ang had made an end of the Hsia dynasty and returned to Po, he issued this announcement, a solemn inauguration of the new dynasty: "Ah! Ye multitudes of the myriad regions, listen clearly to the announcement of me, the One Man. The Great Lord on high has endowed the people below with a conscience, and it is their eternal nature to be in accord with it; while the work of the sovereign is to make them tranquilly pursue the course which it would indicate.

"The king of Hsia extinguished his virtue, and played the tyrant, extending his oppression over you, the people of all the clans from myriad regions. Suffering from his cruel injuries, and unable to endure the bitterness and venomousness, you, the people of all the clans from myriad regions, with one accord protested your innocence to the spirits of heaven and earth. The way of Heaven is to

bless the good and make wretched the dissolute. It sent down calamities on Hsia, to make manifest her guilt.

"Therefore I, the little child, charged with the decree of Heaven and its evident terrors, did not dare to pardon [the criminal]. I presumed to use the dark-coloured victim-bull, and, making clear announcement to the spiritual sovereign in the high heavens, requested leave to deal with the ruler of Hsia as a criminal. Then I sought for the great sage, with whom I might unite my strength, to request the favour [of Heaven] for you, my multitudes.

"High Heaven truly showed its favour to the people below, and the criminal has been degraded and subjected. What Heaven appoints is without error;—brilliantly [now], like the blooming of plants and trees, the millions of the people show a true revival.

"It is given to me, the One Man, to secure the harmony and tranquillity of your states and clans; and now I know not whether I may not offend against [powers] above and below. I am fearful and trembling, as if I were in danger of falling into a deep abyss.

"Throughout all the regions that enter on a new life under me see that ye follow not lawless ways; make no approach to insolence and dissoluteness; let every one be careful to keep his state; that so we

may receive the favour of Heaven. The good in you, I will not dare to keep concealed; and for the evil in me I will not dare to forgive myself. I will examine these things in harmony with the mind of the Lord on high. When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, let it rest on me, the One Man. When guilt is found in me, the One Man, it shall not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions.

"Oh! let us attain to sincerity in these things, and so we shall likewise have a [happy] consummation" ("Shu," Legge, p. 89 *ff.*).

The Chinese God was not the God of the Psalms nor of Job; he was a quiet, deliberate, ethical power that discharged or exercised his function rather impassively. He never showed himself in the midst of fires, thunders, or lightnings to vent his personal ire upon the creatures below. The Chinese never caught a glimpse of their God. He was hidden far up in the azure skies, he could not be brought into immediate personal touch with mortals. His presence could only be inferred through the manifestations of his power—that is, through extraordinary natural phenomena. When he was indignant, he visited all kinds of calamity upon the misguided. So we read in the "Shih Ching" (III, III, 3): "Heaven is sending down death and desolation, and has put an end to our king. It is [now] sending down those devourers of the grain so that the husbandry is all in

evil case. Alas for our Middle States! all is in peril and going to ruin. I have no strength [to do anything], I but think of the power in the azure vault." Again: "Bright was the Milky Way, shining and revolving in the sky. The King said, 'Oh! What crime is chargeable to us now, that Heaven sends down death and desolation? Famine comes again and again. There is no spirit I have not sacrificed to, there is no victim I have grudged. Our jade symbols, oblong and round, are exhausted;—how is it that I am not heard? . . . The drought is excessive, and I may not try to excuse myself. I am full of terror and feel the peril, like the clap of thunder or the roll. Of the remnant of Chou, among the black-haired people, there will not be a half man left, nor will the Lord on high in great Heaven exempt me. One and all, shall we not dread this? Our ancestors will be without successors.'"[93]

These calamities came down from Heaven on account of human wickedness.[94] The cry of the suffering is piteous enough, and if this were raised to Yahveh, it is highly probable that he would listen to it and make a personal communication with his creatures below. But the Chinese God in great Heaven which is far extending,[95] veiled in obscurity[96] (though sometimes bright and illuminating), and having no sound nor odour,[97] is altogether irresponsive; he seems to be not immediately concerned with human affairs, in any event not so personally as the Judaic

God, who "thundereth marvellously with his voice," who "saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength," and again who "sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work" (Job, xxxvii, 5-7). Such a God as this was not in accord with the Chinese imagination.

Though lacking in religious fervour, the Chinese God, besides being a stern moral power, was a political director, whose foremost object of administration was to give his people happiness, peace, and justice. When Heaven found its earthly representative who is called the "son of Heaven" unworthy of his exalted position, it appointed some one else from among the people. This new representative, conscious of his holy mission, gathered about him all the available forces to rise against the prevailing house. He would recount all the outrageous, inhuman sins committed by the tyrant, and in them would seek the justification of his action as heaven-ordained. The "Great Declaration" ("Shu," V, I) by King Wu of the Chou dynasty, though by some considered spurious, fairly illustrates the attitude of a new dynasty against its corrupt, degenerate predecessor. He declares: "Heaven-and-earth is the parent of all creatures; and of all creatures man is the most highly endowed. The sincerely intelligent [among men] becomes the great sovereign; and the great sovereign is the parent of the people. But now

Shou, the king of Shang, does not reverence Heaven above, and inflicts calamities on the people below. Abandoned to drunkenness and reckless in lust, he has dared to exercise cruel oppression. He has extended the punishments of offenders to their relatives. He has put men into offices on the hereditary principle. He has made it his pursuit to have palaces, towers, pavilions, embankments, ponds and other extravagances, to the most painful injury of you, the people of myriad regions. He has burned and roasted the royal and good. He has ripped up pregnant women.

"Great Heaven was moved with indignation, and charged my deceased father Wen to display its terrors; but [he died] before the great work was completed. On this account, I, Fa, the little child, have by means of you, the hereditary rulers of my friendly states, contemplated the government of Shang: but Shou has no repentant heart. He sits squatting on his heels, not serving the Lord on high nor the spirits of heaven and earth, neglecting also the temple of his ancestors, and not sacrificing in it. The victims and the vessels of millet all become the prey of robbers, and still he says, 'The people are mine; the [heavenly] appointment is mine,' never trying to correct his contemptuous mind.

"Heaven, for the help of the people below, made for them rulers, and made for them instructors, that they might be able to be of service to the Lord on

high, and secure the tranquillity of the four quarters [of the empire]. In regard to deciding who are criminals and who are not, how dare I give any allowance to my own wishes?

"'When the strength is the same, measure the virtue [of the parties]; when the virtue is the same, measure their righteousness!' Shou has hundreds of thousands and myriads of officers, but they have hundreds of thousands and myriads of minds; I have [but] three thousand officers, but they have one mind. The iniquity of Shang is full. Heaven gives command to destroy it. If I did not obey Heaven, my iniquity would be as great.

"I, the little child, early and late am filled with apprehensions. I have received the command of my deceased father Wen; I have offered special sacrifice to the Lord on high; I have performed the due services to the great earth, and I lead the multitudes of you to execute the punishment appointed by Heaven.

"Heaven compassionates the people. To what the people desire, Heaven will be found to give effect. Give ye aid to me, the One Man, to cleanse forever all within the four seas. Now is the time. It should not be lost" (Legge, p. 125 *ff.*).

The "Shih" records how Heaven appointed King Wen to take measures against the tyrant of Shang, whose atrocious deeds are enumerated in the above "Declaration." "The Lord on high said to King Wen, 'I am pleased with your intelligent virtue, not loudly

proclaimed nor portrayed, without extravagance or changeableness, without consciousness of effort on your part, in accordance with the pattern of the Lord on high.' The Lord on high said to King Wen, 'Take measures against the country of your foes. Along with your brethren, get ready your scaling ladders, and your engines of onset and assault, to attack the wall of Ch'ung'" (III, I, 7).

The Chinese did not make any distinction between moral and political authority. Whoever is able to govern the people must be a man of moral perfection; and whoever is perfect in his goodness is entitled to a rulership; for the highest position in the state belongs to the one who is nearest to the Lord on high. In this, the Chinese conception of rulership may be considered somewhat akin to that of Plato, who conceives the state as a sort of great ethical institution in which the morally perfect and philosophically great must lead the masses.

When any rebellious uprising was not necessary to enforce the heavenly order of things against a despot, it was the wont of a perfect, virtuous ruler to select the wisest and most virtuous of his subjects as his own successor. In this way Yao raised Shun to the highest office in the state, and Shun in turn selected Yü to succeed him. The occupation of the throne thus effected was ascribed to the heavenly will as we read in "The Counsels of the Great Yü" ("Shu," II, II), in which the minister Yi praises the virtue of

Yao: "Oh! the virtue of the divine Yao is vast and unceasing. It is holy, spirit-like, awe-inspiring, and refined. Great Heaven regarded you favourably, and ordained you to hold all the four oceans and to become the ruler of the empire."

Therefore, it was natural that every dynastic change was considered by the Chinese a decree of Heaven. The Yin failed because Heaven wanted to discontinue its favour, though this was once so generously bestowed upon the declining dynasty. The Chou was favoured because the rising one had proved its virtue and ability to carry out the appointment by the Unknown. The declining house showed by its very decline that it was no longer able effectively to maintain the right entrusted to it by Great Heaven. The disintegration that had been going on within the kingdom was the punishment from above. But if the ruler could not be made to become conscious of the fact and continued to aggravate the wretched condition of affairs, the heavenly punishment was to be completed by the total overthrow of the reigning government.

It was in accordance with this spirit that the Duke of Chou made the following declaration to the officers of the Yin dynasty which he overthrew (1122 B.C.): "Ye numerous officers of the Yin dynasty, great ruin came down on Yin from the cessation of forbearance in pitying Heaven, and we, the lords of Chou, received its favouring appointment. We felt charged with the

manifest wrath of Heaven, carried out the punishment which came from a superior, and rightfully disposed of the appointment of Yin, thus finishing [the will of] the Lord on high. Now, ye numerous officers, it was not our small state that dared to attack the appointment of Yin, but Heaven was not for Yin, for indeed it would not strengthen the disorderly [government of Yin]. But it helped us. Did we dare to seek the office of ourselves? Only the Lord on high was not for Yin as was gleaned from the doings of our common people in whom is seen the manifest wrath of Heaven" ("Shu," V, XIV; Legge, p. 196 *ff.*).

As I stated before, the Chinese Shang Ti never made any direct personal demonstration of his will before the people, though the latter felt intimate enough toward him, as for instance when they appealed to him as the last resort. Whatever displeasure or wrath he felt was only indirectly communicated through such inanimate mediums as drought, famine, epidemics, or earthquake, and especially through the doings and feelings of the common people, which a wise ruler is always anxious to read correctly. Heaven utters no word, but through the people. Its ever-persistent will is to bring peace and good-will and righteousness here below; and when the ruler, failing to execute this order to the satisfaction of the masses, endeavours to promote his personal selfish interests, the people grow uneasy, disorder begins to prevail, a clamour goes up from the suffering, extraordinary

phenomena take place, and herein the wise read symptoms of heavenly displeasure. "Heaven sees as the people see, Heaven hears as the people hear" ("Shu," V., I.). "As Heaven has mercy upon the people, whatever is desired by them is always granted" ("Shu," V, I, *a*). Again, "Heavenly intelligence is shown in the intelligence of the people, and the manifestation of heavenly wrath is shown in the manifestation of the wrath of the people" ("Shu," II, III). The relation between the two, above and below, is so intimate that when one is affected the other is sure to feel it. Therefore, whenever there is a manifestation of unrest among the masses, the wise and virtuous know that the heavenly appointment of the prevailing dynasty is being revoked, and they bide their time to rise against it when all hopes for its regeneration or reformation are gone. *Vox populi, vox dei,* was the motto of the Chinese. Much of the Chinese democracy that prevails in spite of an autocratic form of government, is certainly due to the conception of the divinity of the popular will.

The *vox populi* was not, however, the only means to ascertain the heavenly will. There was another indication of it—divination. When divination and the reading of the popular will agreed, the wise knew conclusively where lay the heavenly will, and did not hesitate to carry this out through every means within their power. When King Ch'ang of the Chou dynasty started on his punitive expedition against the tyrant

of Shang, he divined by the great tortoise-shell bequeathed to him by his father, King Neng, whether the great undertaking he was about to execute were in accord with the heavenly pleasure and could be brought to a successful end ("Shu," V, VII; Legge, pp. 157-158). Having obtained a favourable response, he issued "the Great Announcement" to his fellow-dukes and kings as well as to his own people.

When Shun wanted to select his royal successor, he had recourse to divination, though his mind was first made up as to who it should be. To the protestation of great Yü, that the divine Shun should, before selecting his successor, "submit the meritorious ministers one by one to the trial of divination and let the favourable indication be followed," the divine Shun replied, "According to the rules for the regulation of divination, a person should first make up his mind and then refer his decision to the great tortoise-shell. My mind therefore was first made up. I consulted and deliberated with every one of my people, who all agreed with me. The spiritual beings indicated their approval, the tortoise-shell and divining stalks concurred. Divination, when lucky, should not be repeated. . . . The manifest appointment of Heaven is on thy person, and thou art eventually to ascend the sovereign seat" ("Shu," II, II; Legge, p. 50 *f.*).

In "The Great Plan" ("Shu," V, IV, Chapter 7), we read how divination by the tortoise-shell and the

stalks of milfoil is to be resorted to in the settlemen of doubts.[98] The philosophy of divination is that of the Yih King, to which allusion has been made already in an earlier part of this book.

Thus it is evident that Shang Ti was the supreme power that guided and controlled the destiny of the people below. It was the moral authority of the universe, and its will, in whatever way manifested, either through public opinion or divination, was absolute. The only way to court its favour was to be morally upright and humane. It never showed any personal favouritism. In this can also be seen the peculiarly practical turn of the Chinese mind. Their Shang Ti was the God of monotheism as much as the Yahveh of the Jews; but as I have repeatedly remarked, Shang Ti never entered into such an intimate relationship with mortals as did Yahveh. The Ti was a somewhat impersonal moral principle, though not without some of the human passions as when he showed his wrath through famine and desolation. However this may be, the Chinese conception of Shang Ti was free from the elements of poetical or mystical imagination. He never revealed himself on a certain sacred spot on earth, nor in any material, objective form that could be perceived by the human senses. No Chinese sages ever heard his "still small voice." There was no Moses, no Abraham, no Aaron; but Shun, Yü, Yi Yin, T'ang the Perfect, Duke of Chou, and Confucius—all prosaic and

practical and strictly ethical. Theophany was unknown in China. In short, Chinese imagination could not conceive the utility of the prophet or seer. It is true that the voice of Shang Ti is sometimes represented as having spoken to the mortal ear, but we are always kept in the dark as to his method of communication, if not through strange natural events,[99] or *vox populi,* or divination. He never manifested himself even in dreams or visions.

The early Chinese, however, seem to have made a distinction between Ti and T'ien. Though, of course, this distinction was not clearly defined, Ti appears to have been understood more personally than T'ien. This would at once be felt when Ti is translated into English by "Lord" or "God," while T'ien is rendered "Heaven." About the time of Confucius, or even as early as when the first part of the "Yih King Commentaries" was written, the significance of Ti was almost lost sight of, while T'ien came to occupy the more important place in the religious system of China. In other words, Shang Ti came to be regarded purely as a moral principle or reason of the universe. The most efficient and practical and religious way of serving it was to put all its moral laws such as the five Eternal Codes into practice, and did not necessarily consist in offering prayers or singing hymns or sacrificing victims to an imaginary, invisible presence that at best had no immediate personal relationship to the

world below. The heavenly way was the human way. It was thus that the early religious conception of Shang Ti became gradually metamorphosed into the purely philosophical principle of T'ien and then finally into the ethical idea of Tao.[100]

Another peculiar feature of the Chinese worship of Shang Ti, which must not escape our consideration here, was that there was no popular temple dedicated to him where Heaven-fearing souls might come and offer prayers and ask special grace from above. The worship of Shang Ti was solely a state affair entrusted to a ruler personally, who by virtue of his heavenly appointment was the only authorized personage sacred enough to conduct the ceremony of worship. It was the ruler himself and nobody else who could offer the annual sacrifice to Shang Ti, could give him thanks for whatever he did for the reigning house or the people in general. This was one of the most important imperial functions, the neglect of which might incur a heavenly displeasure and result in a grievous catastrophe to the kingdom. Indeed, it was thought sacrilegious for the masses to worship Heaven,[101] who was too sacred, too divine, too holy to be so familiarly approached by those who were in fact nobodies in the eyes of the Lord on high.

The worshipping of God by the common people, even by feudal lords, was an act of usurpation upon the inviolable right or duty of the reigning sovereign, who alone was the mediator between Heaven and the

people. Though Heaven communicated its indignation through the feeling of the multitudes of the people, it was only one man who was permitted to reflect upon it and take the proper course to appease the heavenly wrath. When this one man was successful in his reflection or interpretation as well as in his undertaking, he was said to have been truly appointed by Heaven. Ever after this, he would never think of neglecting either the annual celebration of Shang Ti, or offering sacrifices on all great state occasions. As we read in the "Shu Ching" and the "Shih Ching," the omission of this sacred and exclusive duty on the part of the occupant of the heavenly seat was counted among the grave offences which merited his dethronement by a more popular and virtuous political leader. This peculiar relation of Shang Ti to the creatures below is due to the fact that the Chinese did not conceive their Ti in his individual relation to mankind generally. The supreme one commissioned the earthly ruler with the office of looking after the welfare, moral and physical, of the masses. The latter, therefore, had nothing to do individually with the highest authority himself. It was sufficient for them if they obeyed the state regulations and acted according to the moral laws conceived as eternal and unchangeable. Of course, they had their ancestors to remember, to revere, and to keep supplied with sacrifices, but this was practically all that the common people

had to do in the way of religion, all their other doings being strictly moral, practical, and secular.

From the earliest time in the history of Chinese civilization, Shang Ti seems to have been associated with the state as such and not with individuals. And as the state was no more than its ruler himself in those days, the latter always assumed the duty to worship Shang Ti and to offer him the proper sacrifice in the proper season. In the great Chinese encyclopædia, "Ku Chin T'u Shu Chi Chêng" (section "Natural Phenomena," chapter "Spiritual Beings and the Miraculous," Vol. IX), we notice reference to the facts that Huang Ti Yu Hsiung Shih in ancient times worshipped Shang Ti in a specially built temple, that Chuan Hsü Kao Yang Shih composed a piece of music called Cheng Yün on the occasion of a sacrifice to Shang Ti, and that later Ti K'u Kao Hsin Shih built a sort of artificial hill in the southern field, where he worshipped Shang Ti, the sun, moon, constellations, and his ancestors. The "Shu Ching," the "Chou Li" (records of the rituals of the Chou dynasty), and also the "Li Ki" contain various statements referring to the state worship of Shang Ti on certain occasions. These facts are confirmed by the "Yih Ching" where (Appendix II) we read: "Thunder issues from the earth; it reverberates, which indicates the trigram *Yü*. The ancient kings, in accordance with this, composed music, and honoured virtue, and offered it magnifi-

cently to the Lord on high, while their ancestors and their father were made to share [at the service]." Further, under the trigram *Hwan*, we read: "Wind moves over water, which is *Hwan*. The ancient kings, in accordance with this, offered sacrifice to the Lord on high and built the ancestral temple."

All this clearly shows that from ancient times the worship of Shang Ti was one of the great state affairs which did not concern the people below. In this connection it may be interesting to note that music was offered to Shang Ti, but no hymns singing of his virtue, power, or mercy.

This peculiar relation of Shang Ti to the people in general is very significant when we consider that he was not the creator of the universe. The early Chinese world-conception was wavering between monotheism and polytheism. It sometimes looked as if it advocated one Shang Ti, and then it fell back upon polytheistic belief, allowing besides Shang Ti in Great Heaven the terrestrial god, the five gods of water, fire, wood, metal, and earth, the mountain gods, and the river gods. But these latter were more or less subordinate to Shang Ti, who apparently occupied the foremost and highly important position in the hierarchy of the gods, though the exact relationship among them was left undefined. At all events, this phenomenal world was not the sole work of Shang Ti in Heaven, but a combined undertaking to which the Earth contributed a great deal of its energy.

Therefore, in the Chinese mind, heaven and earth are very closely associated, so closely indeed that they sometimes form one idea as heaven-and-earth. We can say, however, that a dualistic conception of the world, either in the popular mind or in philosophy, was a most predominant note throughout the history of Chinese thought, not only in its earliest stage, but even when the Chinese mind reached its maturity during the Sung dynasty.

However that may be, this creation, as it were, by heaven-and-earth did not have any particularly well-defined purpose; there was not visible in it any strong predominating will.[102] True, things were regulated according to rules, the universe was surely law-abiding, well-regulated, and by no means chaotic; but these laws were not animated with the presence of a special soul or spirit, which was powerful and active enough to impress itself upon the Chinese imagination. Being singularly practical and positivistic, the latter did not go beyond the boundary of its prosaic reasonableness. There was no logical need for it to find a creator in the Shang Ti, nor was the religious and sentimental demand for him strong enough; and as soon as the worship of the Ti was taken up by the King as his most solemn and especial duty, the people and the philosophers turned their attention in another direction where the Shang Ti did not make himself obtrusive. Thus the Ti gradually came to lose his ancient dignity in the popular mind, and his existence no more

actively and efficiently influenced the course of affairs moral as well as political; and the practical Chinaman has ever since been content with the unpoetic and non-religious notion of T'ien.

* * * * *

In conclusion, it will be found quite interesting to note that there was at least one thinker in ancient China who came to realize in a systematic way the existence more or less of a Supreme Being. I mean Mu-tze, the greatest exponent of humanism and utilitarianism. It was due to him that China ever came to reason methodically about the presence of a Sovereign Power in the world, superintending the course of Nature as well as the doings of moral creatures on earth. Whatever feelings the earlier moralists, philosophers, and political writers might have entertained as to the manifestation of a divine will in human affairs, they were vague and merely tentative, they lacked the support of sound reasoning. Mu-tze, however, for the first time conceived an all-powerful God intellectually, and devoted some special chapters in his book to the subject, trying to prove the presence of a Supreme Being, and giving some concrete reasons why worship and reverence are due to him. In fact, his doctrine of universal love and his extreme utilitarianism are based on the conception of a great, wise, just, impartial will.

The following are some passages culled from Mu-tze

where he reasons for the existence of the highest authority.

The philosopher Mu said: "Those wise men who wish to practise humanity and justice ought to discover the whence of justice.

"Whence is justice?

"Justice does not issue from the ignorant and humble, but necessarily from the noble and intelligent. For justice means good government.

"How do I know this?

"When there is justice in the empire, order prevails; but when there is no justice, confusion prevails. Therefore, I know that justice means good government. Those who are ignorant and humble cannot govern the noble and intelligent, while the latter can govern the former. For this reason I know that justice does not issue from the ignorant and humble, but from the noble and intelligent.

"Who then is noble, and who is intelligent?

"It is Heaven that is noble, it is Heaven that is intelligent. If so, it must be from Heaven where justice issues."

People of to-day, however, may say: "We know for certain that the sovereign is nobler than the feudal lord, and the feudal lord than the state official. But we do not know that Heaven is nobler and more intelligent than the sovereign himself."

The philosopher Mu said: "I know the reason why Heaven is nobler and more intelligent than the

sovereign. For when the latter does an act of goodness, he is rewarded by Heaven; but when he commits disorderly deeds, he is punished by Heaven. When he is sick or suffers calamities or curses, he will, after fasting and performing ablation, make offerings of sweet liquor and corn to the Heavenly spirits; and it is then that Heaven removes all these evils for him. I have, however, never known cases in which Heaven asks the sovereign for blessings. Therefore, I know that Heaven is nobler and more intelligent than he.

"Not only this; the books by the ancient sage-kings tell us about the intelligence and activity of Heaven: 'How clear-sighted and knowing Heaven is! It looks down on the world below as its sovereign.' This is to say that Heaven is nobler and more intelligent than the sovereign. I do not know if in fact there is anything nobler and more intelligent than Heaven. As it is thus Heaven that is the noblest and the most intelligent, it must surely be from Heaven where justice issues.

"Therefore, wise men of to-day who wish from their inmost hearts to practise rationality, to develop the material resources of the country, and to discern the origin of humanity and justice, ought to revere the Heavenly will."

"If we have to revere the Heavenly will, what does it desire? What does it hate?"

"The Heavenly will does not desire to see the

greater states attack the lesser ones, the greater families disturb the lesser ones, the strong abuse the weak, the cunning outwit the simple, and the noble lord it over the humble. These are not desired by Heaven.

"Heaven, on the contrary, desires that the stronger among the people should co-operate with the weaker, the virtuous instruct the ignorant, and the wealthy divide with the poor. It again wishes that the higher ones should make efforts to conduct the government, and the lower ones to attend to their own occupations. When the higher ones make efforts to conduct the government, order prevails in the state; when the lower ones make efforts to attend to their occupations, there is an abundant supply for public expenditure. Now let the kingdom be orderly and abundantly supplied with means, and the people on one hand will make offerings of purified liquor and corn to Heaven and the spiritual beings, while on the other hand they will barter rings, gems, pearls, and jades with their neighbours on all sides. Against such a people no feudal lords will harbour enmity. On the frontiers there will be no clanking of arms. Within the empire the hungry will be fed, the tired left to rest, and all the people find refuge and nourishment. The sovereign and superior officers will be benevolent, the subjects and inferiors loyal; the father and elder brothers loving, children and younger brothers obedient. Therefore, if one, reverently in accord with the

Heavenly will, practise it in the empire, generally, one will be able to administer a judicious government, to keep the people in harmonious order, to increase the wealth of the country, and to meet all the public expenditure. When all the people are thus comfortably dressed and sufficiently fed, there prevails a general peace, free from worries. Therefore, wise men of to-day, wishing from their inmost hearts to practise rationality, to develop the material resource of the country, and to discern the origin of humanity and justice, ought to revere the Heavenly will.

"Moreover, the relation of the sovereign to his empire is no more nor less than that existing between princes of the minor states, or feudal lords, and their respective principalities. Why should these princes and lords wish to see their subjects and states and peoples do harm to one another? When a greater state attacks a smaller one, and a larger family puts in disorder a lesser one, how could the offender expect to be praised and honoured for this crime? Surely they will be most severely punished and executed. The way in which Heaven governs the world is exactly like that. Stronger states by attacking the smaller ones, or larger cities by invading the smaller ones, may wish to have blessings from Heaven; but blessings will never be theirs, for they would surely be visited by calamities and curses.

"Therefore, when our conduct is not in accord with Heaven's desire, but is what Heaven does not desire

us to do, then Heaven will act towards us, not in the way we desire, but directly against us; for we shall then have to suffer diseases, epidemics, calamities, and curses. Therefore, if the sovereign fails to do Heaven's will, but acts contrary to it, all the people of the empire along with himself will be plunged into the abyss of calamity and curse. Therefore, sage-kings of olden times knew well how disasters would be brought by Heaven and the spiritual beings upon the people, and they avoided those deeds which would not be liked by Heaven and the spiritual beings. This is because the ancient kings wished to promote the welfare of the empire and to avoid those things that were not conducive to this end. Consequently, Heaven arranged cold and heat, and regulated the four seasons, and harmoniously disposed of the Ying and Yan, rain and dew. The five cereals ripened according to the season, the six domesticated animals multiplied, and diseases, epidemics, or famines never assailed the people.

"Moreover, I know how sincere Heaven's love for the people is. For it is Heaven that created the sun, moon, stars, and constellations, and made them shine and follow their courses duly; that arranged the four seasons in order to regulate the lives of the people on earth; that by means of thunder, falling snow, frost, rain, and dew quickens the growth of the five cereals and thread-yielding flax, all of which profits the people materially; that planned the formation of mountains,

rivers, and valleys, producing wealth in manifold forms; that created kings, princes, and various lords in order to supervise the moral conditions of the people, rewarding the deserved, and punishing the disorderly, and to have them supplied with enough means for their clothing and nourishment, making metals, earth, birds, and beasts, to serve them, and cultivating the five cereals and thread-yielding flax plants. From the earliest times down to the present day there has never been any change in this state of affairs.

"Heaven thus knows no partiality in its love for the world, it quickens and matures all things, thereby benefiting them all. There is not a single object in this world which is not heavenly made and yet which could not be used by the people and thereby benefit them. But those men who only know small things and ignore the greatest, do nothing in the way of requiting the heavenly favours, and do not know that this constitutes so-called inhumanity and misfortune.

"Again, Heaven gives misfortune to those who kill the innocent. If Heaven did not sincerely love the people, why would it punish the offender with misfortune?

"Again, in history we have concrete examples where those who in accord with Heaven's will loved and benefited the people were rewarded by Heaven; while those who contrary to Heaven's will hated and wronged the people were punished by Heaven. To the former

class belong the sage-kings of the ancient three dynasties—Yao, Shun, Yü, T'ang, Wên, and Wu. What did they do? What they did was to practise universal love and avoid partiality. That is to say, they did not allow the larger states to attack the smaller ones, the larger families to put the smaller ones in disorder, the strong to threaten the weak, the more numerous to abuse the fewer, the cunning to plan against the simple, the noble to lord it over the humble. In whatever undertakings of theirs, they never forgot to benefit the three things, that is, Heaven, the spiritual beings, and the people. When all these three are universally benefited, it is called Heavenly Virtue, and beautiful names are added to it.

"Therefore, Heaven's will is like unto the compass of a wheelwright, or the rule of a carpenter. When the wheelwright taking up his instrument wants to measure and to distinguish between what is circular and what is not circular, he will say: 'That which is in accord with my instrument will be called a circle, while that which is not will not be so designated. By this, I distinguish one from the other.' Why? Because his measuring instrument is correct. As with the carpenter, so with Heaven's will. It desires first to measure the rightful administration of kings, princes, or grand persons in the empire, and, secondly, to judge the literature and utterances of all the people. Whatever deeds or utterances or administration that are in unison with Heaven's will are called good;

while those contrary to it are called bad. It is through this heavenly law and standard that the humaneness or inhumaneness of all the kings, princes, grand persons, and higher officials is measured and judged, as when we distinguish between black and white.

"Therefore, those kings, princes, grand persons, or wise men of to-day who wish sincerely to practise rationality, to promote the material resources of the country, and to discern the origin of humanity and justice, ought to be obedient to the will of Heaven. For obedience to the will of Heaven is the law of justice."

NOTES

[1] The "Three Rulers" (*san huang* 三皇), generally known as the Heavenly, Earthly, and Human Sovereigns, are perhaps personifications of the three powers of Nature. Their age belongs to the mythological era of Chinese history.

[2] The "Five Emperors" (*wu ti* 五帝) are always mentioned, but their names vary. A most popular enumeration is Fuh Hi, Shen Ming, Huang Ti, Kin T'ien, and Chuan Hu, covering the period 2852-2355 B.C.

[3] The "Shu Ching" is one of the Five Books (*wu ching* 五經), considered canonical by the Confucian scholars ever since the time of Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.) of the Han dynasty. They are: "Yi Ching" (Book of Changes), "Shih Ching" (Book of Odes), "Shu Ching" (Book of History), "Li Ki" (Records of Rites), and "Ch'un Ch'iu" (Spring and Autumn). See the "Sacred Books of the East," Vols. III, XVI, XXVII, XXVIII, and also the "Chinese Classics," by Legge, Vols. III, IV, V.

[4] The two ideal sage-kings of ancient China. Yao reigned 2356-2255 B.C., and Shun 2255-2205 B.C. But some authorities, among whom Dr. Shiratori, of the Tokyo Imperial University, deny their historicity.

[5] Literally, "*Tao*" is the way or reason; "*Te*," virtue; and "*Ching*," canonical book. As regards the nature of the book and the author, see the text, where the monistic philosophy is treated.

[6] What a glorious age this was for early thinkers of China can be seen from the fact that several writers and historians of the day made attempts to classify them according to their doctrines, the number of which had become confusingly large. To quote only one of those historians, Pan Ku, author of the "History of the Han Dynasty" (*Han Shu*), divides the Ante-Ch'in thinkers into ten classes: (1) Scholars (*ju chia*, Confucians); (2) Taoists (*tao chia*); (3) Astrologers and Geomancers (*yin yang chia*); (4) Jurists (*fa chia*); (5) Logicians or Sophists (*ming chia*); (6) Followers of Mu-tze (*mu chia*); (7) Diplomatists (*tsung heng chia*); (8) Miscellaneous Writers (*tsa chia*); (9) Agriculturists (*neng chia*); (10) Story Writers (*hsiao shuo chia*).

[7] The "Book of Changes" was not included among them, for it was considered a book of divination, which could not possibly do any harm to the absolute government of the First Emperor.

[8] Perhaps the Emperor's drastic measures were not solely responsible for this state of things which followed his reign, but the Chinese mind itself began about this time to show symptoms of exhaustion, as we can judge from a school of sophistry which then arose, and whose chief advocates were Ching Sun Ling and his followers.

[9] This is what Orientalists call "modern Chinese philosophy," though quite Mediæval as regards the time. When we know the ancient Ante-Ch'in philosophy and this "modern" one, it can be said that we know all about the speculative development of the Chinese mind throughout its long history. For in the first period we come across genuine Chinese efforts to solve the problems of the universe quite independent of any foreign influence. (The so-called Indian influence on the early Taoists is not probable.) In the second period, philosophers of the Sung dynasty en-

deavoured to handle the old questions with a light borrowed from Buddhism, which, however, was not openly acknowledged by them.

[10] It took some time, however, for Confucianism to assume this superior position. At the beginning of its career it met with strong opposition at the hand of the Taoists, who, at times, seemed to get the better of their rival, especially in the earlier periods of the Han dynasty, when the Emperor Wên, Empress Tou, and their son Ching (under the influence of his mother), showed great partiality towards the followers of the old philosopher, Lao-tze. With the coming of Emperor Wu, the Confucians began to manifest great activity, finally bringing about what we might call the golden age of literature in the Han period. The period of the Six Dynasties that followed was characterized by the predominance of Buddhist thoughts and feelings which drew their vitality partly from Taoism. Early in the Tang dynasty Lao-tze again became conspicuous, for the Emperor Tai, claiming the same ancestry as the sage himself, honoured the latter with the sublime title of the "Tai shang hsüen yuen huang ti" (great, superior, unfathomable, primordial, august Lord), and a special devotional palace was built in his honour, where the Emperor annually worshipped him in great style. But the tide of Confucianism, which was all the while gathering its strength in spite of royal disapproval, at last succeeded in gaining the upper hand over its rival school; and when it became a fixed order of things in Chinese life that every officer, civil and military, was recruited from among those who passed examinations in the Confucian classics (and Confucianism is eminently fitted for this purpose), Taoism as well as Buddhism for ever lost their official hold upon the people; and, as we know that officialism is everything in the Middle Kingdom, we can understand into what

predicament the followers of Lao-tze were finally reduced.

[11] We can well imagine what a difficult task it was for the first Chinese Buddhists to render their highly abstract and greatly complicated canonical books into the native tongue. They could never be transformed and compressed into the classical model of Chinese philosophy; and the result was that even to-day, after more than one thousand years of intercourse and intermixture with the native thought, Buddhist literature forms a distinct class by itself. Those scholars who are versed only in general Chinese classics are unable to understand Buddhist writings. Even Buddhist monks themselves who could not read the Sanskrit or Pāli originals must have experienced almost unsurmountable difficulties in understanding the translations of their sacred books.

[12] What was done by Confucius along the line of literary work was mostly the compiling and editing of old records and traditions. Of the Five Canonical Books thus edited by him, the "Spring and Autumn" undoubtedly comes from his own pen, but certain parts of the "Book of Changes," known as "Appendices," and usually ascribed to his authorship, are by some scholars denied to be indisputably his. The best book that gives his own views is the "Analects" (*Lun Yü*), compiled by his disciples, probably some time after his death, but not as we have it to-day, for it was not until after the firm establishment of the Han dynasty that the "Analects" began to assume the canonical shape in which it has been transmitted to later generations. This book also throws light on his personality. It is the New Testament of Confucianism. An English translation (second edition), by Legge, was published in 1893. The volume also contains his translation of the other two of the "Four Books" (*Shi Shu*), that is "The Great Learning"

(*Tai Hsiao*), and "The Doctrine of the Mean" (*Chung Yung*). "The Mencius," the fourth of the Four Books, was also translated by Legge, and forms the second volume of the "Chinese Classics."

[13] The Life of Lao-tze is almost lost in legendary mist, but one thing authentically known is that he was an older contemporary of Confucius, and flourished during the sixth century before Christ. The "Tao Teh Ching," "Canon of Reason and Virtue," is the title of his only work which was said to have been written by him through the request of his friend and disciple, Kwan-yin-tze, when the old philosopher was leaving his own country for an unknown part of the world.

[14] We do not know for certain whether Confucius wrote those "Appendices." They may contain some of his own sayings and thoughts, especially in such passages as introduced by "The Master said"; but the "Appendices" as a whole were evidently written by many hands, as their styles and expressions and points of view vary widely from one another.

[15] Others, however, assert that the character *yi* primarily represented the form of a chameleon, and was etymologically connected with the character *lung* (dragon), to which the former has a certain morphological resemblance. And as the chameleon owes its most characteristic feature to the changeability of its colour, the character *yi* gradually came to signify the abstract idea of change in all its modes. It is possible that if the chameleon were really habitually found in the region where the thoughtful author or authors of the "Yi Ching" flourished, he or they must have been struck with the mysterious changes obtainable on the skin of this strange animal, and finally drew his (or their) own conclusions about the divine signification of this peculiarity.

[16] *Cf.* Legge, p. 348 *ff.* The passages quoted

in this book are generally based on Legge's translations wherever they were available, but in most cases with some alterations, as the present author deemed fit.

[17] *Cf.* Legge, p. 395.

[18] Legge, p. 423.

[19] I shall not venture my opinion concerning the nature and significance of the "Yi Ching" proper, as this does not particularly concern us here. The "Appendices" are more important and interesting as embodying an early system of Chinese speculation, and as forecasting the development of Chinese philosophy in the Sung dynasty. For further information concerning the *kua* (trigram) and *yao* (lines) of the "Yi Ching," see Dr. Carus's "Chinese Philosophy and Chinese Thought," p. 25 *ff.* (Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago.) See also Legge's "Yi Ching" in the "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XVI.

[20] *Cf.* Legge, p. 350.

[20a] *Cf.* Legge, p. 353.

[21] His date is not exactly known. He seems to have lived somewhere between 379 and 294 B.C. Mencius is the Latinized form of Mang-tze. His book, which bears his own name, consists of four or seven (when sub-divided) chapters or books. Similar to the Confucian "Analects," it is mainly composed of the dialogues which took place between the author and the feudal lords of his days whom he visited, and also of those between him and his followers as well as contemporary scholars. Legge's English translation of Mencius is included in the "Chinese Classics." Arthur B. Hutchinson published in 1897 an English translation of Faber's "Mind of Mencius," which was originally written in German. The sub-title of the book is "Political Economy Based upon Moral Philosophy, a Systematic Digest of the Doctrines of the Chinese Philosopher."

[22] There exist several translations of this most

widely known book of Taoism in the English as well as other European languages. It is a short work consisting of some five thousand Chinese characters. It is divided into eighty-one chapters as we have it now, but the division was not the author's own, and it sometimes distracts us from an intelligent reading of the book as a whole, which may best be considered a compilation of epigrams and aphorisms.

[23] That Lao-tze records many of his predecessors' views and sayings is seen from his frequent use of such expressions as : "Therefore says the sage," "This is what is anciently said," "So we have the early writers saying this."

[24] This is Dr. Carus's term for *tao*.

[25] It is difficult to determine the time when the book began to be divided into chapters; for, according to Sse Ma-ch'ien, the only division made by the author was into two parts. But later on commentators, each relying on his own judgment, divided the text into 55, 64, 68, 72, or 81, while some made no such attempts. The division here adopted is that of eighty-one, not because the present writer considers this the best way to understand the text, but merely because it is the most popular one.

[26] The term, *T'ai Chi*, first appears in one of the Confucian Appendices to the "Yi Ching." "In the system of the Yi there is the Great Ultimate (or source or limit, *t'ai chi*). It produces the two regulators" . . . This passage has been quoted elsewhere. Here, however, the term *t'ai chi* does not seem to have a very weighty metaphysical sense. It only meant what it literally means, "great limit." The important philosophical signification it came to bear originated with a thinker of the Sung dynasty called Chou Tun-i (A.D. 1017-1073). According to him, "The Non-ultimate is the Great Ultimate. The Great Ultimate moved, and it produced Yang (male principle). At

the consummation of the motion there was a rest in the Great Ultimate. While resting it produced Yin (female principle). At the consummation of rest it resumed motion. Now moving, now resting, each alternately became the root of the other. With this differentiation of the Yin and the Yang there have been permanently established the two principles."

[27] It may be explained here that the character *tze*, which is found in connection with most of the Chinese philosophers' names, has an honorary signification. It primarily means a child, then son, then any male, young, middle-aged, or old, and finally gentleman. It also means teacher, sage, philosopher. As a term of address it is equivalent to "sir."

[28] Lieh-tze, otherwise called Lieh Yu-kou, is generally known to have lived between the times of Lao-tze and Chwang-tze, that is, sometime in the fifth century before Christ. The work which goes under his name seems to have been compiled by his disciples. It consists of eight books or chapters, and was first edited in the fourth century A.D. by Chang Chen of the Tsin dynasty. My quotations here are mostly taken from Book I, in which his ontological views are comprehensively presented. A partial English translation of the Lieh-tze was published by Frederick Henry Balfour in his "Leaves from My Chinese Scrapbook" (pp. 85-135), under the heading, "A Philosopher who Never Lived" (London: Trübner and Co., 1887). There exists also a French translation, complete, by Ch. de Harlez in his "Textes Taoistes," 1891, and a German translation by E. Faber, 1877.

[29] We find these terms used by Lao-tze (Chapter VI) without reference to an earlier authority; but Lieh-tze quotes them as from the "Book of the Yellow Emperor." Is it possible that such an ancient literature was still in existence during the Chou dynasty? If such was the case, and the book really contained such

passages as quoted by Lao-tze and Lieh-tze, we must seek the origin of the Taoistic thoughts in the earliest days of Chinese civilization. Indeed, the Yellow Emperor is frequently referred to as an ancient sage by all the writers, and we find the doctrine of "Huang Lao" (that is, the Yellow Emperor and Lao-tze) linked together, and usually put in contrast to that of Confucianism.

[30] Chwang-tze was a contemporary of Mencius, and must have flourished toward the end of the fourth century B.C. He was a great classic writer, and his writings are considered among the best specimens of early Chinese literature. His work which we now have is divided into three parts, "Inner," "Outer," and "Miscellaneous," altogether consisting of thirty-three books. It is said that originally it was made up of fifty-three books, twenty of which are now missing. About the genuineness of the writings, a consensus of opinion is that the first "Inner" part undoubtedly comes from his own hand, but that the remaining two parts are so interlaced with spurious passages that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other. But, generally speaking, even those spurious parts are a development of Chwang-tze's own thoughts. We have two English translations of Chwang-tze—one by Giles, and the other by Legge in the "Sacred Books of the East."

[31] "Formerly, I, Chwang Chou, dreamt that I was a butterfly, a butterfly flying about, feeling that it was enjoying itself. I did not know that it was Chou. Suddenly I awoke and was myself again, the veritable Chou. I did not know whether it had formerly been Chou dreaming that he was a butterfly, or whether it was now a butterfly dreaming that it was Chou. This is the case of what is called the transformation of things" ("The Inner," Book II).

[32] Chwang-tze's attitude towards God as the maker

of the universe is that of an indifferent agnosticism. To quote his own words: "What is that which makes us such as we are? I do not know. May I assume the existence of an absolute ruler who makes things as they are? Yet I am unable to grasp his peculiarities. All that I know of him is that his working is practicable though its features are hidden. He has indication but no forms. . . . Judging from this standpoint, it is reasonable to conceive of the existence of an absolute master, yet it would not make a particle of difference to this absolute master whether our intelligence is allowed to catch a glimpse of his signs or not. We are such as he made us."

[33] This book has never been translated, so far as I know, into any European language. It is doubtless a much later production, but contains a great deal of profound philosophical reflection worth studying.

[34] Ch'eng-tze, or Ch'eng Hao, A.D. 1032-1085. He is the author of the books called "Ting Hsing Shu" and "Shih Jên P'ien," embodying the gist of his philosophy. His brother, I, was also a noted thinker.

[35] Or, Chou-Hsi, great commentator on the Confucian Classics, A.D. 1130-1200. He was a disciple of Ch'ing-tze, and wrote many books, which later became the standard works for the orthodox Confucians, that is, those who do not advocate the views advanced by Lu Chiu-yuan (A.D. 1140-1192), the great rival philosopher of Chou Hsi, as well as by Wang Yang-ming of the Ming dynasty.

[36] Died 233 B.C. He was a disciple of Hsün-tze, and his chief study was criminal law. Fifty-five of his essays are still extant, among which there are some commentary notes to some of Lao-tze's sayings. His position as a moral writer is neither strictly Confucian nor Lao-tzean.

[37] The three cardinal virtues are: Wisdom (*chi*) 智,

humaneness (*jên*) 仁 and courage (*yu*) 勇. The five virtues are: Humaneness (*jên*) 仁, righteousness (*i*) 義, propriety (*li*) 禮, wisdom (*chi*) 智, and faithfulness (*shên*) 信.

[38] "Tai Hsiao," one of the Four Books (*shi shu*) of Confucianism. It was Chou-tze of the Sung dynasty, who selected these four books as most elemental and fundamental in the study of Confucianism. Before him, they did not have any recognized place in the Confucian system.

[39] It will be interesting to note what Swedenborg says concerning man's state after death: "In the spiritual world no one is allowed to think and will in one way and to speak and act in another. Every one there must be a likeness of his own affection or of his own love, and therefore must be outwardly such as he is inwardly" ("Heaven and Hell," § 498). While living in the natural world, most people are hypocrites, they hide their ruling love deep within themselves, and do not know what its real nature is; perhaps they may see glimpses of it now and then in their solitary moments, when they have no need of disguising themselves before others; so Swedenborg says that it is very difficult to know what one's ruling passion really is. Confucianism, therefore, advises us to be watchful over one's own heart, when being free from all the external constraints, it reveals itself in all its activity, and there to find out its true nature, which is the man himself, as the Swedish mystic truly remarks that "every one is his own love and is thus as his ruling love is?" ("Heaven and Hell," § 58).

[40] "Chung Yung," another of the Four Books, generally considered the work of Tze-szu, the grandson of Confucius and the teacher of Mencius. This is one of the most philosophical books on Confucian ethics.

[41] "The Doctrine of the Mean" does not exactly

express the meaning of the Chinese term "chung." "Chung" ordinarily signifies "middle," which is also its etymological sense, but in the "Chung Yung," it means rather a state of equilibrium or potentiality in which all the passions and impulses are yet hidden and not brought out into operation, and in which, therefore, good and evil are not yet manifest and remain in a state "without name" (*wu ming*, or *wu yuh*), to use a Lao-tzean term. And this state of equilibrium (*chung*) is said by Tze-szu to be the "great foundation of the world," and by Lao-tze the "beginning of the universe" (Chapter I). The whole passage in the "Chung Yung" runs as follows: "Love and anger, sorrow and joy, when they are not yet manifest, this is a state of equilibrium (*chung*); when they are manifest all in accordance with order, this is harmony (*hwa*). Equilibrium is the foundation of the world, and harmony is the thoroughfare of the world. When equilibrium and harmony are maintained, heaven and earth are determined, and all things grow." Compare this with what Lao-tze says: "The unnamable is the beginning of the universe, and the namable is the mother of all things." When *chung* is rendered by "the mean" instead of "equilibrium," the sense of the entire passage above quoted becomes very obscure, and the contrast between the statical *chung* and the dynamical *hwa* (harmony) will be destroyed.

[42] Confucius once said ("Analects," Book XVII): "I wish to keep silence." Tze-kung, one of his eminent disciples, who was surprised at the Master's remark, said: "If the Master keeps silence, what shall we, humble disciples, have to record?" Confucius said: "What does Heaven ever speak? The four seasons come in turn, and all things grow. Does Heaven ever speak?" There are certain well-regulated laws in the universe which pursue their course without demonstration. Find them in our own hearts, and

sincerely follow them as they dictate. This is the Confucian common-sense intuitionalism.

[43] We read in Mencius (Book II *b*): "The sage-kings are no more now, and the feudal lords are behaving as they please, while irresponsible scholars are talking with utmost freedom. The world is filled with the utterances of Yang-chou and Mu-ti, and anybody who talks at all belongs to the school of Mu if not to that of Yang. . . . So long as the teachings of Yang aud Mu are not repressed, those of Confucius will not be made manifest. The false doctrines are deceiving the people and suffocating humaneness and righteousness. When humaneness and righteousness are suffocated, men become beastly. Hence my solicitude for the preservation of the teachings of the ancient sage. It is my desire to keep Yang and Mu in check, and to drive away their unrestrained utterances, so that the upholders of the false doctrines may not raise their heads again."

[44] When we scan their works, the character of each looms up with great clearness and definiteness. One is dignified in mien, deliberate in speech, and stately in movement; the other, quite opposite to this, is free and unrestrained in every way. We can mentally picture one donning a golden robe with the embroidered figures of dragon and phœnix, and sitting on a throne bedecked with all kinds of brilliant gems, and presiding over an assembly of noblemen, who reverently bow before his august personality which is singularly tempered with a humane expression. The other, however, might be imagined as swinging himself in a rustic hammock among luxuriant summer greens, his old, almost threadbare dress loosely hanging about him, and with an expression which hardly betrays a trace of earthly concern, while his eyes are rapturously raised toward a drifting cloud in the distant sky. What a pitiful fate it was that these two

geniuses possessing peculiarly contrasted characters, but both endowed with unusual dianoetic power and living contemporaneously in the same land, never chanced to see each other!

[45] Kao-tze seems to have been a philosopher contemporary with Mencius. He did not leave any work of his own, but in many ways he seems to have taken issue with Mencius on the subject of human nature.

[46] *Cf.* Book II *a*, as quoted above, p. 67.

[47] This is Dr. Carus's term for *wu wei*.

[48] *Cf.* Chapter XLIII. "The weakest under the heavens chases and drives the hardest under the heavens, and there is no space where it does not penetrate. For this reason I know the usefulness of not doing (*wu wei*)."

[49] *Cf.* the following Confucian injunction on the subject: "Someone asked Confucius, 'What do you think of requiting hatred with virtue?' Answered the Master, 'What then will virtue be requited with? Requite hatred with justice, requite virtue with virtue.'"

[50] In "Chwang-tze" we have the following dialogue between Yang-tze and Lao-tze: Yang-tze-chou saw Lao-tan and said: "Suppose here is a man who is quick in turning towards the Tao and energetic in action, whose insight into the nature of things is penetrating, whose intelligence is thorough-going, and who knows no fatigue in the study of the Tao; could such a man be compared to the wise ruler?" Said Lao-tan: "When compared to the holy man, such a man would look like a navvy or petty tradesman, who ever belabours himself with his trick and handicraft, dissipating his bodily energy and wearing out his spirit. And again, tigers and leopards are killed by the hunter because of their beautiful skins; monkeys and dogs which are clever enough to hunt

up badgers are caught in turn by a trap because of their very craftiness; how could such ones be compared with the wise ruler?" Yang-tze-chou then assumed a solemn countenance and asked: "May I inquire what would be the wise ruler's government?" Lao-tan answered: "In the government of the wise ruler, his merits embrace the entire world, and yet remains as if not conscious of his own doings; his all-regenerating love extends over the ten-thousand things, and yet the people are not conscious of its presence. Though there are many other things to be mentioned about him, I will not go into details, only that under his government everything would be rejoicing with itself; for abiding in the unfathomable, he leisurely walks in the non-existent." This answer of Lao-tze to Yang-tze reminds us of the former's reply to the founder of Confucianism when he was requested to give him the meaning of propriety ("Chwang-tze," Book VI).

[51] In "Han-fei-tze," we read that Yang-tze was once travelling through the state of Sung and passed a night at an inn in its eastern district. The innkeeper had two wives; one was very beautiful, while the other was homely; but it was the latter that was more honoured by him. Yang-tze inquired of him why it was so, and the man answered: "The beautiful one is too conscious of her beauty, and I do not know how she could thus be beautiful; the homely one recognizes her own homeliness, and I do not know how she could thus be homely." Yang-tze said to his disciples: "Remember this, my young men, if you behave wisely and yet be unconscious of your being wise, there will be no place on earth where you will be hated" (Book VII, Chapter XXII). This passage also occurs in "Lieh-tze," Chapter II, "On the Yellow Emperor."

[52] What follows is condensed from Lieh-tze's work

in which there is a chapter exclusively dealing with the views of Yang Chou.

[53] To be free from all the artificial or outward restraints, moral or otherwise, and to abandon oneself to the enjoyment of one's inward life—this is typical of all the Taoists. Chwang-tze also makes one of his characters (Tao-shih) exclaim against the Confucian conventionalism: "Let me tell you now what lies in the inmost heart of every individual. His eye desires to see what is beautiful, his ear desires to hear what is melodious, his mouth to taste what is delicious, and his inner impulses and feelings want to be satisfied. The height of longevity to which one can attain is one hundred years, the next is eighty, and the last sixty. How often, except for a few days, can one be free from illness, death, or worry, and have a hearty laugh? . . ." Also see below.

[54] See footnote 4.

[55] Generally known as the Great Yü. He succeeded Shun and reigned 2205-2196 B.C.

[56] Died 1105 B.C.; fourth son of Wên Wang, and younger brother to Wu Wang, and one of the founders of the Chou dynasty.

[57] Died 1122 B.C. He was the last Emperor of the Yin dynasty, and committed all kinds of the wildest orgies, which enabled Wu Wang to establish the foundation of the Yin dynasty.

[58] Died 1763 B.C. The last ruler of the Hsia dynasty, who also recklessly indulged in cruelty and debauchery, and was finally overthrown by Tang the Perfect. Chou and Chieh are the two symbolical tyrants of China.

[59] The "Lieh-tze," "On Yang-tze," where this passage occurs in the dialogue between An-ping-shang and Kwan-yi-wu.

[60] Says Mencius (Book XIII): "With Yang-tze egotism is everything. Even when he could benefit

other people by sparing one bit of his hair, he would not do that. With Mu-tze altruism is everything. If by rubbing himself from forehead to heel he could benefit other people, he would do so. Tze-Mo adheres to the mean. The adhering to the mean is nearer [to the truth]. But if, in adhering to the mean, the weights are missed to keep balance, it is just as bad as adhering to the extremes. The reason why the extremists are condemned is that they mutilate the [whole] Tao, that they raise one point [too high] at the expense of a hundred others."

[61] To my knowledge there exists no English translation of the work. In Faber's German translation, an abstract of each chapter is given. There also exists a French work on this philosopher by Alexandra David, 1907.

[62] This is partly due to the neglect suffered by Mu-tze at the hands of Chinese scholars through the successive dynasties until the last Tsin, when a few scholars picked up, as it were, the almost-forgotten philosopher to examine him in a new light. If he had not been ignored so long, we should have possibly had a far better text than the one we have at present, poorly edited, and almost unintelligible in many places.

[63] No early Chinese philosopher is so conscientiously methodical in his reasoning as Mu-tze, who always endeavours to prove every step he takes in accordance with such logical laws as are set forth by himself. It is strange that the Chinese mind refused to listen to his methodical exposition of utilitarianism and to effect its fuller development.

[64] "The refuting of the arguments of Yang and Mu should be like the taming of the wild hogs. After they have been put in a pen, they should be bound fast" (Mencius, Book XIV). In another place (Book VI) he again compares them to the lower animals. Hsün-tze is not so severe and impassioned as Mencius

in the condemnation of the Mu-tzean utilitarianism. He says: "Mu-tze's one-sided doctrine of utility made him ignore the significance of culture and refinement (*wên* 文). When utilitarianism (*yung* 用) prevails, the Tao is lost in commercialism (*li* 利) (Chapter XXI). In another place (Chapter VI) declares Hsün-tze: "He, Mu-tze, does not know how to consolidate the empire and to establish an administrative order in the state. He gives precedence to efficiency and utility, exaggerates the importance of economy and thrift, and pays no attention to the order of social organization. He has never allowed himself to entertain the thought of distinguishing classes, and therefore he does not recognize the distinction between the sovereign and the subject. To maintain his theory, Mu-tze now advances some plausible reasons; and in expounding them he displays a certain logical skill so that ignorant masses are ready to be deceived and confused by him."

[65] In the Confucian "Analects," XVII, 21, one of his disciples wants to shorten the mourning period from three years to one. While his argument is very rational, the master refuses to agree with him on a sentimental ground, which, however, seems to be somewhat too far-fetched and not at all convincing.

[66] For Hsün-tze's condemnation of the prosaic unmusical Mu-tze, see p. 111.

[67] He was born in 340 B.C., and the greater part of his exceedingly long life was spent in the kingdom of Ts'i. When eighty-six years old, he went to Ch'u to seek a new refuge. After some vicissitudes, he died at the very high age of over one hundred and twenty years. Like most Confucian scholars, his entire life, except his last twenty or so years, was passed as a high state officer.

[68] Chapter XIX, "On the Rules of Propriety" (*Li lun p'ien*).

[69] Chapter XXIII, "On the Badness of Human Nature."

[70] A similar view was also expressed by Confucius himself in the "Analects"; for he says: "Once I fasted the whole day and did not sleep the whole night, all the time engaged in thinking. It was of no use, however. Nothing is like study [that is to say, practical discipline]."

[71] An abstract of Chapter I, "On the Encouragement of Study."

[72] "Music means enjoyment, and enjoyment is what the human heart inevitably craves. Therefore, one cannot go without some form of enjoyment, which expresses itself in sound and action. This is human. All the movements that may take place in our hearts will thus be manifested outwardly. Therefore, we must have some form of enjoyment, and this enjoyment must be demonstrated; but when the demonstration is not in accordance with certain laws, it will inevitably lead to disorder. As the wise men of old hated this disorder, they regulated the singing of man so that it might lead him to the path of rectitude. Thus, people sang and enjoyed themselves, but did not go to excess; their melodies were various, and each expressed their feelings, which were thus checked; all the modes of inflection, combination, intonation, and concordance were enough to awaken in a man's heart a variety of good feelings and to keep him away from evil and filthy influences" (Chapter XX, "On Music").

[73] Hsün-tze is right in a sense when he says against the reasoning method of Mencius as follows: "It is stilted and lacks in universality; it is obscure, and there are no definite explanations; it is tightening, and the knots remain unloosened." (Chapter VI, "Against the Twelve Philosophers").

[74] 天 *t'ien* (heaven) and 大 *t'ai* (great) and 人 *jên* (man) all seem to have developed from the common

source representing a human figure with outstretched arms, that is, . To avoid confusion, this archetypal character was later differentiated into the three forms, 天, 大, 人, while *t'ai* (great) retained its original type more faithfully than the others; for it is engraved in the ancient vases, thus: , , , , and finally . The character "man," however, seems to have suffered most changes, though their different stages are not now traceable, perhaps owing to its earlier transformation. The only ancient type we have of it is or , which some lexicographers try to explain by making it represent a human figure as seen sidewise, but this guess is too obviously wrong to be refuted, when there is no reason to suppose that the ancient Chinese people preferred this obscure character to the most natural one without some serious reason; and the reason is, is an abbreviation or a transformation of the original to distinguish it from *t'ai* or *t'ien*, which meaning gradually came to be attached to the original signification of *jên* (man). Therefore, *t'ien* primarily signified simply something above, and not something great which is above. The latter explanation is too philosophical to be the conception of the natural man. *T'ien*, as we have it engraved in the ancient vessels, appears in the following forms: , , , .

[75] The character *ti* 帝, the ancient form of which is , is, according to a Japanese sinologue, composed of three elementary characters: "above" —, "great" , and "wide" ; and it signifies a mighty one who is on high.

[76] It may not be altogether proper to consider

Shang Ti as a being residing in heaven (*t'ien*). Though it is certain that he was not merely a moral power nor the personification of Heaven as some Christian missionary scholars of Chinese religion are inclined to believe, he was not a person in the fullest sense of the word. But he had something of personality in him and could properly be called "he" instead of "it." There is no doubt, however, that the early Chinese did not conceive their Shang Ti as did the Jews their Yahveh. When the Chinese spoke of Shang Ti, they had in their minds something of an august supreme being in Heaven above, who was the arbiter of human destiny, though not their creator. He did not, exactly speaking, reside in Heaven, but Heaven was his material or objective expression. Figuratively speaking, Heaven was Shang Ti, and Shang Ti was Heaven. A famous commentator to the "Wu Ching," Lü Shih says: "It is called Heaven (*t'ien*) when viewed from the point of its overshadowing the entire world; it is called Lord (*ti*) when viewed from the point of its rulership." Again, the author of the "Lü Shih," a history of prehistoric China, says in one of his supplementary essays attached to the History: "Ti is T'ien, and T'ien is Ti. Why, are they not identical? T'ien is a general name given to primordial essence [*yüan ch'i*], while Ti is a name given to its virtue as manifested in its activities. It is T'ien when viewed from the point of its objectivity; it is Ti when viewed from the point of its rulership. When the immensity of depth, height, and expansion of the essence is considered, it is called the 'lord on high in great heaven.' When reference is made to the fact that the lords of water, fire, wood, metal, and earth abiding in different localities assume alternately the rank of leadership, we consider the Lord differentiating himself into five lordships, and he is accordingly known under five different names, which

may, however, be comprised in the one name of Great Heaven. When sacrifices are offered to the five lords who severally assuming their celestial ranks are to be designated under one common appellation, then they are collectively known as the Shang Ti (Lord on high)."

[77] That is, Shun, who became the ruler of this early settlement in the year 2255 B.C.

[78] 神 (*shên*) was originally written 𠦂 (申), and meant lightning; 示 (*shih*) was added later when the idea of a spiritual being was conceived who is the controller of electric current in the heavens. 𠦂 symbolizes, as we can still trace its meaning even in its present form, rays coming from above, and means a revelation from a higher being to the creatures below. Therefore, as far as the etymology is concerned, *shên* denotes a spiritual being, who, residing in a region above us, sends down its rays of revelation on the earth.

[79] The quotations from the "Shu" and the "Shih Ching" are generally taken, with occasional modifications, from Legge's translations in the "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. III.

[80] *Cf.* "Shu Ching," Part V, Book I, "The Great Declaration"; "Heaven and Earth are the parents of all creatures."

[81] Legge, p. 352 *ff.* The poem is said to have been composed by Chih Fu, a grand officer of the Chou dynasty under King Yü (781-771 B.C.), who listened to the evil advice of his favourite mistress Yin.

[82] Legge, p. 357. The author of the poem is Chih Yu of the Chou dynasty, who wrote this, lamenting the unjustifiable action of the King, and expressing his surprise at its progress unchecked by heavenly wrath.

[83] Legge, p. 125 *f.* From the first section of the "Great Declaration," which is divided into three.

The Declaration was issued by King Wu of the Chou dynasty when he assembled his army at Mang Ching to attack Chou Hsin, the tyrant of the Shang. Some consider this spurious.

[84] Legge, p. 358. A poem written during the reign of King Yü who was notorious for his misconduct. It continues: "[The King's] counsels and plans are crooked and bad. When will an end be put to them? Good counsels are not followed; evil counsels are listened to. When I look at the counsels and schemes, I am greatly grieved."

[85] Legge, p. 429. Composed in the time of King Yü. The author evidently believes in the almighty power of Heaven who can turn misery into happiness, if the people below behaved according to his behest.

[86] This is from a poem composed by a court officer engaged in a frontier war. Speaking of the hardships which he endures, he calls to Heaven that knows everything which transpires on earth, and continues: "I marched on this expedition to the West as far as this wilderness of Ch'iu. From the first to the second moon, I have passed through the heat and the cold. My heart is sad, the poison [of my lot] is too bitter. I think of those officers at court, and my tears fall down like rain. Do I not wish for home? but I dread the net of guilt."

[87] Legge, p. 416. From a didactic poem by Duke Wu of Wei in his ninetieth year.

[88] Legge, p. 321. By Chou Kung, who admonishes his minister of agriculture.

[89] Chia Fu lamenting the misrule of his King ("Shih," II, IV, 8. Legge, p. 354).

[90] Legge, p. 417. The whole stanza runs thus: "Oh, my son, I have told you the old ways. Hear and follow my counsels, then shall you have no cause for great regret. Heaven is now inflicting great calamities and destroying the state. My illustrations

are not taken from things remote; great Heaven never errs. If you go on to deteriorate in your virtues, you will bring the people to great distress."

[91] Observe also the following: "The ordinances of Heaven, how uninterrupted they are! and how unfathomable!" ("Shih," IV, I, 2). "The doings of High Heaven have neither sound nor odour. Follow the example of King Wen, and the myriad regions will repose their confidence in you" ("Shih," III, I, 1). "How vast the Lord on high! He is the ruler of men below. When in his fearful wrath, the decrees of the Lord on high are full of woes. Heaven creates the multitudes of the people, whose destinies are not uniformly determined. There are none who have not their [hopeful] start, but few are they that have a [blissful] finish" ("Shih," III, III, 1).

[92] This justification was later subscribed to by Confucius, who says in one of his commentaries on the "Yih Ching," that "The revolution of T'ang and Wu was in accordance with Heaven and in harmony with men."

[93] "Shih," III, III, 4. The drought occurred in the sixth year of King Hsuan of the Chou dynasty. He reigned 827-781 B.C.

[94] Confucius seems to have shared this belief to a certain extent as his "Analects" records his assumption of a reverential attitude as if in awe for something extraordinary, whenever there was a hurricane or thunder of unusual violence.

[95] "Shih," II, V, 4; II, IV, 10, etc.

[96] "Shih," II, IV, 8; III, III, 10, etc.

[97] "Shih," III, I, 1.

[98] Divination by the tortoise shell is called *pu* 卜, and that by the milfoil *shih* 筮. Why these two things have been selected for this particular purpose is explained, according to one commentator, by the fact that they both acquire something of spiritual

signification when sufficiently old so as to enable a diviner to consult spiritual beings through these mediums. The shell is burned in a fire properly purified, and in the cracks thereby produced are read divine signs. In the case of the milfoil, forty-nine stalks of it are separated and counted over and again until eighteen changes are effected, when the diviner is finally able to settle his doubts.

[99] Hsün-tze was a very practical and unimaginative thinker. Note what he says about strange phenomena of nature which the early Chinese people thought to be expressions of heavenly indignation: "The stars are falling, the trees are roaring, and the people of the kingdom tremble with fear. What does this signify? It does not signify anything. It is a natural disturbance caused by Yin and Yang, and occurring at irregular intervals. It is rational to wonder at it, and irrational to fear it. Such things as the eclipses of the sun or moon, unseasonable storms, or the frequent appearance of strange stars—such things occur in every generation. If the ruler is enlightened and his government is honest, however often such events may take place, he cannot be hurt. If the ruler is benighted and his government is disorderly, even if there may take place no such things, he is of little account. Therefore, the shooting of stars, or the roaring of trees, is no more than a mere natural disturbance, caused by Yin and Yang, and occurring at irregular intervals. It is rational to wonder at it, but irrational to fear it" (Chapter XVII, "On Heaven").

Compare this with the almost religious attitude of Confucius toward unusual natural happenings such as violent thundering or hurricanes, as recorded in the "Analects."

[100] The following passage from Hsün-tze (Chapter XVII, "On Heaven") will show what a prosaic and

practical conception of Heaven the author had; and when we compare this with the attitude of the Five Canonical Books towards Heaven, which was highly religious and reverential, we can at once feel the gap that came to exist between the canonical writers and the philosophers. Says Hsün-tze: "The working of Heaven is constant; it does not exist for Yao, nor does it disappear for Hsüeh. When a man responds to it with order, there is luck; when he responds to it with disorder, there is evil. When he strengthens the foundation and is economical in expenditure, Heaven cannot make him poor; when he takes the proper nourishment and exercises himself regularly, Heaven cannot make him ill; when he is single-hearted in practising what he ought to, Heaven cannot do him any harm. Therefore, such a one cannot be made by rain or drought to suffer hunger or thirst, cannot be made by cold or heat to suffer sickness, cannot be made by evil spirits to suffer misfortune.

"When a man, however, neglects the foundation and is extravagant in expenditure, Heaven cannot make him rich; when he does not take sufficient nourishment and does not exercise himself frequently enough, Heaven cannot make him healthy; when, deviating from the course which one ought to follow, he wanders about irregularly, Heaven cannot make him happy. Therefore, such a one will suffer hunger before a drought or rain comes; he will be sick before the cold or the heat is yet threatening; he will be miserable before evil spirits visit him.

"Peace is gained by opportuneness and not by evil procedure; there is no reason to blame Heaven, for it is as it ought to be. Therefore, one who has a clear understanding of the distinction between heavenliness and humaneness, is called the perfect man."

[101] The reason why the common people were not allowed to worship the Shang Ti individually, and

why the ruler himself did not worship him more frequently, is partially seen in the following passage from the "Li Ki" (Book XXI): "Sacrifices should not be frequently repeated. Such frequency is indicative of importunateness, and importunateness is inconsistent with reverence. Nor should they be at distant intervals. Such infrequency is indicative of indifference, and indifference leads to forgetting them altogether" ("S. B. E.," Vol. XXVIII).

[102] The Chinese poets and philosophers were not altogether unconscious of a predominating will in the universe, which is beyond human control; but this consciousness did not play a very important part in their emotional life. As a typical instance of the Chinese philosophical attitude towards the universal will, here is a passage quoted from Chwang Tze: "Tze Lai fell ill and lay gasping at the point of death, while his wife and children stood around him weeping. Li went to ask for him and said to them, 'Hush! Get out of the way! Do not disturb him in his process of transformation.' Then, leaning against the door, he spoke to him [the dying friend]: 'Great indeed is the author of transformation! What is he now going to make of you? Where is he going to take you? Is he going to make you the liver of a rat? or is he going to make you the arm of an insect?' Tze Lai said, 'A son's relation to his parents is such that whenever he is told to go, whether east, west, south, or north, he simply obeys the command. A man's relation to the Yin and Yang is more than that to his parents. If they are hastening my death, and I do not obey, I shall be considered unruly.

"'Now, there is the Great Mass, that makes me carry this body, labour with this life, relax in old age, and rest in death. Therefore, that which has taken care of my birth is that which will take care of my death.

"'Here is a great founder casting his metal. If the metal, dancing up and down, should say, "I must be made into a Mo Yeh [a famous old sword]," the great founder would surely consider this metal an evil one. So, if merely because one has once assumed the human form, one insists on being a man, and a man only, that author of transformation will be sure to consider this one an evil being. Let us now regard heaven-and-earth as a great melting-pot and the author of transformation as a great founder; and wherever we go, shall we not be at home? Quiet is our sleep, and calm is our awakening'" ("S. B. E.," Vol. XXXIX, p. 249).

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